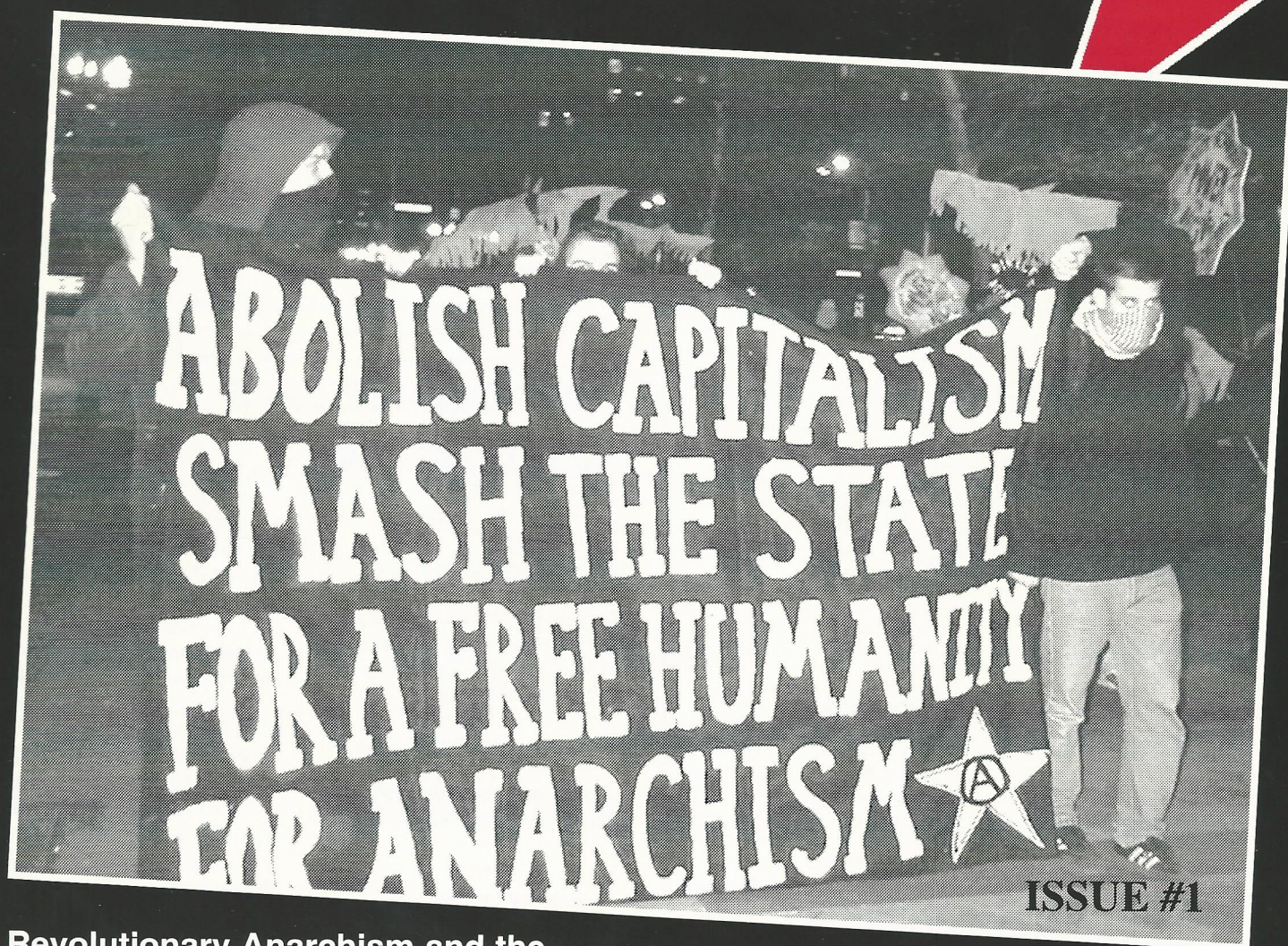


THE NORTHEASTERN ANARCHIST

Magazine of the Northeastern
Federation of Anarcho-Communists



Revolutionary Anarchism and the
Anti-Globalization Movement • Black Blocs, Property Destruction
and Anarchist Tactics • A Short History of Anarchist Organization
• Peter Kropotkin's Anarchist Political Economy

\$4

The *Northeastern Anarchist* is the English-language magazine of the *Northeastern Federation of Anarcho-Communists (NEFAC)*, covering news of revolutionary resistance that is of interest to the anarchist movement, and publishing class struggle anarchist theory, history and analysis in an effort to further develop anarchist communist ideas and practice.

The *Northeastern Federation of Anarcho-Communists (NEFAC)* is a bi-lingual (French and English) organization of revolutionaries from the northeastern region of North America who identify with the communist tradition within anarchism. The federation is organized around the principles of theoretical coherence, tactical unity, collective responsibility and federalism, and our activities include study and theoretical development, anarchist agitation and propaganda, and intervention within the class struggle.

As anarcho-communists, we struggle for a classless, stateless, and non-hierarchical society. We envision an international confederation of radically democratic, self-managed communities and workplaces where all markets and exchange value have been abolished; divisions of labor and the wage system rejected; and all industries, means of production and distribution socialized in order to allow for the satisfaction of human needs, adhering to the communist principle, "From each according to ability, to each according to need."

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the premier issue of *The Northeastern Anarchist*, the new theoretical and agitational magazine of The Northeastern Federation of Anarcho-Communists (NEFAC). The federation was established in April 1999 in an effort to provide an organized revolutionary presence here in the northeastern region, and also to popularize anarcho-communist ideas and practice within the general anarchist movement. *The Northeastern Anarchist* aims to make these goals international.

With thousands taking to the streets of Washington, DC, in what has been called the largest Presidential Inauguration Day protest since Richard Nixon took office in 1973, and thousands more preparing to take action against the proposed Free Trade of the Americas Agreement (FTAA) at the third summit of the Americas in Quebec City, protest and resistance seem to be on the continual rise here in the region.

Beyond this general spirit of dissent, the past year has seen an increase of anarchist publications here in the U.S. and Canada.

Most of these publications show vital signs of life for the anarchist movement, both asking questions and discussing issues that deepen and

improve our strategy for social revolution, and in this battlefield of ideas and discussion we imagine *The Northeastern Anarchist* making positive contributions for the movement and swelling our ranks for impending victory.

As a member collective of NEFAC, and the editorial collective for this magazine, we have an obligation to report on the progress and activity of the federation, but more importantly we hope to provide a forum for discussion around revolutionary organization and class struggle anarchism.

In the end, we hope that the federation and the work that we are doing will be inspire others to get organized, just as we hope that this magazine will encourage constructive debate within the anarchist movement so we can begin to build a serious revolutionary challenge to capitalism, the state, hierarchy, and all oppression!

From working class resistance to social revolution...

Revolutionary Greetings from the Sabate Anarchist Collective

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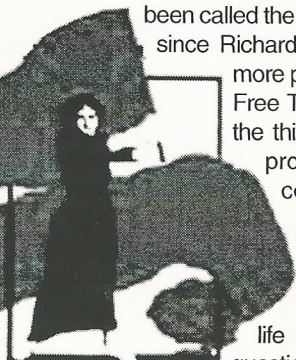
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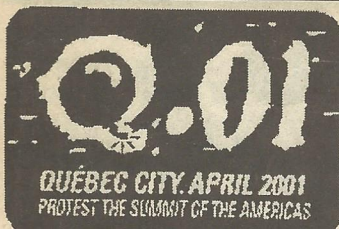
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Radicalize This!

Building the Resistance to the FTAA and Summit of the Americas

by Nicolas Phebus

QUEBEC CITY -- In April 2001, the Organization of American States (OAS) will sponsor in Quebec-city the third Summit of the Americas, a meeting of 34 heads of states that is scheduled to discuss "continental integration". The proposed "integration" is in fact an extension of NAFTA --the infamous North American Free Trade Agreement-- to all of the Americas except Cuba.

Just as the organizers are already on the ground trying to sell the Summit to the local population, so is the opposition already crystallized and active in most social fields. Since we guessed readers don't need another article telling them how capitalism and the proposed Free Trade of the Americas Agreement (FTAA) are bad and destructive, this article will try to present who's working on the ground in Quebec to organize the resistance.

THE "OFFICIAL OPPOSITION": THE BUREAUCRAT'S "PEOPLE'S SUMMIT"

As anyone following the global protest movement would have guessed, this Summit of the Americas will also have a counter-summit organized by the mainstream union federations and big NGO's. Several networks have been working on this for years. There is the continent wide "Social Alliance" which is composed of most "free" union federations (such as the AFL-CIO and Canadian Labor Congress) and bigger NGO's (such as the Sierra Club or the Council of Canadians).

In Canada, the main coalitions are "Common Frontiers" in english-speaking Canada and "RQIC" in Quebec (Quebec network on continental integration). These people busied themselves trying to gain a place around the negotiation table and their main objective is to have a "social clause" in the agreement that will defend social and worker's rights. In general, on grounds of realism, they argue, like the AFL-CIO and Quebec FTQ, that globalization is

a phenomenon that can't be opposed and to which we must adapt. For some of

them, the fight is already lost.

This is not all, however, as some unions, smaller NGO's, and most student unions have been organizing in a local coalition for months. This coalition is called OQP-2001 (Operation Quebec Spring 2001 in english). This coalition aims to organize non-violent protests to expose the Summit and FTAA. The OQP-2001 coalition could have been interesting as it adopted a clear anti-FTAA position, however it also ruled early on against direct democracy and refused to have a sovereign general assembly and chose a group based structure instead. This move annoyed many locals, as it gave power to professional activists (such as union bureaucrats) and group representatives instead of the actual activists who do the work. As the months went by, the most conservative elements won a wave of votes that bind the coalition to strict non-violence, a clearly reformist agenda and forbid it to collaborate with any groups that don't adhere to a strict non-violent platform. In fact, this was only a small part of a much larger fear campaign aimed to marginalize "radicals" and "peace loving-rock throwing anarchists" (as one local Montreal "activist" once put it).

THE RADICALS

Where do anarchists fit in all of this? Well, at first, the Quebec-city based NEFAC member 'Groupe Anarchiste Emile-Henry' was active in OQP-2001, but soon left (shortly after the vote against direct democracy). And, to be fair, it took us a while before we kicked ourselves in the ass and moved onto something else.

In Montreal, however, things were a little bit different and moved much faster. As there was no local organizing going on, three local anti-authoritarians launched a call a year before hand to form a coalition to "bring the spirit of Seattle to Quebec-city in April". After a few long meetings, the Anti-Capitalist Convergence (CLAC) was founded. It's core principles are in total contrast with most

other anti-globalization groupings. First, it's radically democratic, second it's anti-capitalist, non reformist and radical, and, what's more important, it respects a "diversity of tactics". The work done by la CLAC is fairly impressive. First off, most of it's meetings are attended

by a crowd in between 50 and 100 people and it have a core of about 30 activists, maybe more. Second, it already have proved, on the ground, that it can mobilize a fairly large number of people. For example, in October, it mobilized between 700 and 1000 people to protest the G20 meeting in Montreal (see elsewhere in this magazine), and also organized some huge popular education days. The one I attended in December had about a dozen workshops and was attended by about 150 people.

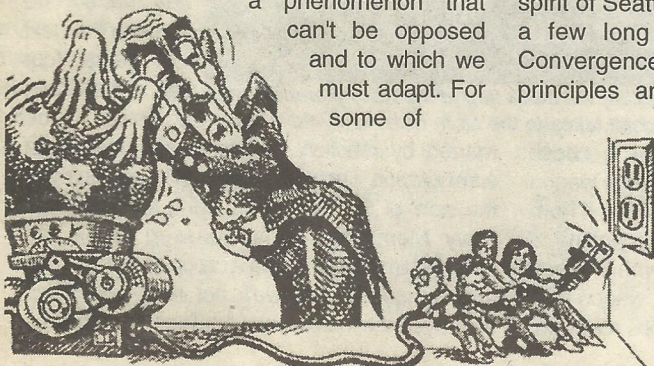
For a time, la CLAC wished to have working links with OQP-2001, but this was turned down when the latter chose not to be associated with any groups who were not explicitly "non-violent". Needless to say this annoyed a number of anarchists and other radical activists. It was decided to organize two public events in Quebec-city co-sponsored by la CLAC, Groupe Anarchiste Emile-Henry and Le Maquis (another local anti-authoritarian collective) and see what happened. In the mean time, Emile-Henry and Le Maquis chose, as there was no radical opposition to the Summit and as we were less and less interested to work within OQP-2001, to issue a call to form an individual based coalition organized around the same principles as la CLAC. Well, everything went pretty well, more than 100 people attended both events, and some 75 people chose to be associated with the new group. The Summit of the Americas Welcoming Committee (la CASA) was founded.

WHAT ABOUT ACTION?

La CLAC and la CASA have established a fairly close working relationship, as one would guess. Both groups are proposing a Festival of Anti-Capitalist Resistance in Quebec-city during the Summit (from April 20-22nd) and a Global Anti-Capitalist Day of Action on the 20th. In Quebec-city, to insure the "respect of a diversity of tactics" both groups are advocating, we will propose different spaces so no one steps on the toes of anyone else. Both groups are also calling for an activist gathering and "consulta" in Quebec-city in January, in order to get some feed back from people elsewhere. As for the reformists, no one seems to be proposing a blockade of the Summit anymore, but rather a traditional demonstration on the 21th. As you see, we'll have some fun in April...

To get more info, check www.quebec2001.net and www.cmaq.net
To get in touch with la CLAC, email clac@tao.ca, for la CASA, try la_casa2001@hotmail.com

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Thousands Protest U.S. Presidential Inauguration

WASHINGTON, D.C. — On Saturday, January 20th, protesters flooded the streets of Washington, D.C. in protest of George W. Bush's inauguration into presidency. Estimates put the number of demonstrators in the U.S. capitol around 20,000, the largest number to protest Inauguration Day since the start of Richard Nixon's second term as president in 1973, when 60,000 showed up to protest the Vietnam War. Folks turned up en masse to voice a variety of issues, from those concerned with *Class War Now: For a Classless, Stateless Society* the illegitimacy surrounding Bush's victory, to people opposing his views regarding the death penalty and the rights of women. Still others came, not only to demonstrate against the new presidency, but to the entire state system, from the dictatorship of capitalism to the sham of a representative democracy.

Supporters of Leonard Peltier and Mumia-Abu Jamal, as well as members of the New Black Panther Party, the National Organization of Women, the Justice Action Movement the International Action Center, and a host of other groups, lined the inaugural parade route shouting, jeering, heckling and gesturing to Bush's cavalcade as it passed by, drowning out the parade announcer's loudspeaker. Some even hurled eggs, rotten fruit and water bottles at the heavily armored presidential limousine, but a timid Bush remained safely inside until the final block of the parade route, where the crowd consisted mostly of supporters. In the past, the president-elect, including George Sr. and even Clinton, has walked large stretches of the parade on the way to his swearing in; not this year. Ironically enough, thanks to the success of anti-abortion demonstrators who sued to win permits for the last inauguration, protesters were allowed along Pennsylvania Avenue, though they resolved, anyhow, to show up even where they weren't permitted.

As promised, anarchists showed up in force to make it clear that a rotten election and a rotten president aren't the only issues at hand. Under the banner of the Revolutionary Anti-Authoritarian Bloc, 5-600 militant anarchists rallied to let everyone know that it matters little who wins the presidency and how they do it, the entire system of power and privilege is the scourge of freedom and, as such, must be

destroyed. Consequently, most of the day's action seemed to revolve around the bloc.

The previous night, a group of about 100 planning to participate in the black bloc held a meeting to decide on a course of action for Inauguration Day, taking efforts to make security as tight as possible. Contrary to reports describing the bloc as spontaneous and disorganized, the anarchists started punctually, and maintained a very high level of organization. As planned, banners unfurled at 9:45am, and at ten the bloc moved from Franklin Square, about four blocks from the parade. In the fashion of the German anti-fascists, they carried banners on all four sides to help keep a tight formation and further protect themselves from penetration. While the group marched, bicycle-scouts rode ahead and thanks to good communication, the bloc carried out navigational decisions easily, making their way along the route decided night before: first to the parade route, then to the IAC meeting point, and finally to the Washington Post.

Along the way, cops attempted to corral the black bloc and isolate them from the other demonstrators, at which point it looked as if they were gearing up to make mass arrests. About 80 escaped down an alley and ten or so made it through police lines, assembling again across the street, when another group of protesters, numbering around 1,000, mostly NOW, IAC, and even some Democrats, marched through, nearly surrounding the police. Outnumbered, the cops were forced to release their detainees.

The black bloc reassembled at a check point and enlisted the services of a large wagon found at a nearby construction site hiding it from view using the lead banner. Approaching a police checkpoint, slightly downhill, they removed the banner and charged, wagon first. It sent the metal barricade flying, the cops scattered,

and the bloc surged through the lines. Were it not for the quick thinking of a secret service agent, who placed his car in its path, the wagon could have made it all the way to the parade. As the cops regrouped the situation became more tense, someone tossed a big orange traffic barrel at the police ranks, further disorienting them. The black bloc made it about three-quarters of a block from the parade and could possibly have gained it, but decided the risk of secret service bullets was too great.

Regrouping next at the Navy Memorial, anarchists set aflame ten to fifteen U.S. flags and replaced three of the memorial's flags with one black flag, one black and red flag, and one inverted American flag. Police descended on the plaza, engaging the protesters in a back-and-forth shoving match and eventually getting themselves surrounded. The black bloc fought them off as they inched their way backward, stumbling over one another all the way to the barricades. People met again around five, and talked about making their way to the inauguration balls, but they numbered few now and decided to call it a day.

Scuffles occurred throughout the day, mostly with undercovers and secret service agents, resulting in some bloodshed at the hands of police batons, and, at last count, only nine arrests, which seems pretty good considering the black bloc's success. In the end property damage was minimal, a few windows broken, a few tires slashed, and a few buildings hit with paint-bombs. Protests took place in over twenty

cities in the U.S. and abroad in a show of international solidarity with the inauguration protests.

Hopefully, this marks the start of revolutionary resistance to come in the next four years; four years that have

potential to be marred by reaction rival to that of the Reagan administration. Bush would do well to bear in mind the sight of the black flags flying high over the Navy Memorial, as he passed by in an armored limousine amidst a cacophony of dissent, and remember that we'll not rest until we've destroyed the institutions of privilege and power.



After raising the black flag at the Navy Memorial, this anarchist takes to the air in order to avoid arrest

Montreal G20 Meeting Greeted by Angry Demonstrations

MONTREAL -- From October 23-25th, anti-capitalist activists converged on the Sheraton Center in downtown Montreal to once again oppose global capital. The occasion for the protest was the most recent meeting of the G20, which was held at the Sheraton Center on the 24th and 25th. Over these three days there were three separate demonstrations, which ran the gamut from radical to reformist, from confrontational to pacifist, offering an important insight into the divisions which the anti-globalization movement faces.

Monday saw the largest crowd of the 3 day long protest, with nearly 1000 demonstrators gathering during the evening in front of the Sheraton, with a myriad of groups showing up in force, including the Anti-Capitalist Convergence (la CLAC), and Food Not Lawns, two of the more radical groups. This demonstration was organized by the radical "G20 Welcoming Committee," and was able to draw the largest crowd despite having very few resources and a hampered outreach. After a long day of police antagonism and repression, some of the demonstrators, waving red and black flags, began to pelt the building with paint bombs, while others attempted to create a barricade and lit a trash can on fire. Police dressed in full riot gear, and others on horseback, then charged into the crowd, using tear gas, pepper spray, and batons in a brutal display of force to disperse the crowd. Many demonstrators, including a small but well-organized Black Bloc, fought back against the police charge, using their flags, stones, and masonry to defend themselves, as well as returning cans of tear gas to their senders. Many pacifists in the crowd opted instead to simply sit down in front of the police. However, the protestors were unable to hold the ground, and police began to chase a large crowd through the downtown streets, using pepper spray and batons to make 39 arrests. Of these, more than a dozen were from the pacifist sit-down, many were innocent

bystanders caught in the middle of the confusion, but not a single one was from the Black Bloc.

On the following day, protestors again arrived at the Sheraton to protest the G20, this time in a permitted rally. This demonstration was organized by the local section of the CNTU, Quebec's second largest trade union federation. They were met, however, by several hundred riot police forming a solid perimeter around the building. As the crowd grew to several dozen a full half hour before the scheduled rally time, however, the police began to physically press the crowd back up an avenue towards a metal barricade. Soon afterward the police delivered an ultimatum via megaphone to either leave the area immediately, or face arrest. This demand was met with a chorus of jeers and chants of "Fascists!" Police then forced the crowd, which had grown to more than 200, behind the other side of the barricade.

Police arrested an additional seven people while forcing the crowd back, all of whom they claim were identified as having participated in the demonstration the previous night, and were arrested on charges from that demonstration. After police and protestors stared each other down for several hours, the protestors began to disperse. A third demonstration also took place, which was orchestrated by a student union from Montreal, and which worked entirely hand-in-hand with the police. They had their own "peacekeepers," and enforced a dogmatically pacifist, anti-confrontational tactic upon everyone present. This demonstration drew even less people than the 200 mustered at the CNTU-organized rally.

Of the 46 arrested, four in particular found themselves the target of police and state repression. Bail was denied to three of the demonstrators, Daniel Carriere, Stephane

Blais, Kevin Spillane, who were to be held for at least two weeks pending their next bail hearing. Long-time activist Jaggi Singh was also arrested, though not until well after the confrontation on the first evening of protests. After being detained for over 48 hours, prosecutors attempted to secure Singh's continued detention until trial, which would have meant at least a month in jail. Singh was able to successfully argue for his release, but was placed under harsh, and overtly political, bail conditions. Most of the demonstrators were angered by the police tactics and violence, but not surprised. One activist was quoted as saying, "It's not surprising that when a group of people try to protest for their right, as citizens, to a world in which people and the environment come before profit, [the police] repression is extreme and severe."

The G20, or Group of 20, is an outgrowth of the Group of 7, composed of the world's seven wealthiest nations. The G20 includes all members of the G7, the now infamous IMF and World Bank, and several of the large "third world" nations, officially entitled "emerging economies". The aim of this group

is to create international stability in the world financial markets, in order to prevent a global financial collapse. The impetus for the G20's formation was the Asian economic crisis of 1997, in which the so-called "Tiger" economies of many Asian nations were decimated by a very rapid collapse. The effects of this crisis

were felt all around the globe, with many areas still officially considered to be "recovering." In order to counteract the unsustainable nature of capitalism, these heads of state and financial experts created the G20 last year, which will create and enact policies aimed at benefiting the elite and creating stability by furthering the exploitation of workers and the poverty-stricken worldwide.



Sheraton Center becomes a target for anarchist paintbombs



Riot cops charge G20 protesters

Candidates Go Home!

October 3rd Demonstrations Against the Presidential Debates

BOSTON - On Tuesday, October 3rd, several thousand people hit the streets in protest of the first U.S. presidential debate, which took place on the UMass Boston campus. Though the majority of participants involved with the demonstrations were liberal reformists looking to "expand the debates" and allow for third party participation, they were joined by large contingents of anarchists and other radical activists who came to agitate for revolutionary alternatives to electoral and statist politics.

The action at the debate site was preceded by a march through Boston's financial district, which was dubbed the "Freedom For Sale Trail", and another large demonstration which called for the freedom of Mumia Abu-Jamal and an end to the racist death penalty, which marched from Dudley Square through the predominately black and Latino working class neighborhoods of Dorchester to the UMass Boston campus, where the presidential debates were taking place.



Redefining the designated protest zone

The situation began to get a little tense as the march neared the UMass campus. As demonstrators reached the debate site, it was steered down the campus' main access road to a designated protest zone. The march proceeded down this road, half-blocked off by heavily equipped riot police, and flanked by pro-Gore union members. After avoiding a near confrontation with police outside of the campus, a number of scuffles ensued between pro-Gore unionists and assorted Greens and anarchists, leading to a few isolated arrests. Also, police were reported to have arrested a small handful of anarchists who were separated from the black bloc mobilization.

Once in the "protest area" an anarchist black bloc assembled and decided what

steps to take next. It was agreed that in order to open a path to the debate site, an attempt to rush the police barricades would be the plan of action. This led to a direct confrontation between anarchists and riot police, which lasted about ten minutes, and resulted in a hail of rocks and bottles aimed at the police lines, and a police counter-attack with pepper spray and baton charges. Police also attempted to arrest people from the front lines by pulling them over the barricades. Several were successfully unarrested, but unfortunately the police managed to take three individuals into custody.

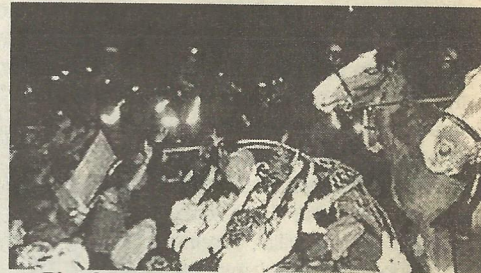
After the initial charge made by anarchists, a group of non-violent demonstrators attempted to climb over the barricades peacefully and "walk to the debate." Needless to say, the obvious reaction of the police occurred, and many peaceful individuals were pepper-sprayed and promptly arrested.

Following these events, everything settled down for the next two hours. Unfortunately, at one point, it seemed as if the day's events were coming to a close, and many people began to leave. However, at about 11pm, a number of activists took a surprise offensive, and disassembled an underguarded section of the barricades. Hundreds of protesters surged into the streets, some linking arms while others sat down, effectively blocking traffic from leaving the site of the debate. The street blockades divided between pacifists who chose to sit in the street, and protesters who chose to stand their ground and actively defend themselves against police attacks. The inner disputes over tactics managed to create a strategic fault line between demonstrators and it expedited the break-up of the blockade. The blockade lasted for about a half an hour, at which time police on horseback rode into non-violent demonstrators causing a brief retreat.



Putting police barricades to good use

While this was taking place, a number of anarchists, supported by several Greens, began to take sections of the downed metal police barricades and built a second line of defense against the advancing police lines, and to block cars that contained secret service.



Riot Survival Tip - A wall of placards can bring charging police horses to a halt

In a relatively short time, and in a remarkable show of collaboration among protesters, they dismantled a large section of the metal barricades and stacked them across the street.

As police began to arrest demonstrators who took part in passive civil disobedience, militants from the black bloc attempted to defend through more confrontational methods, hurling projectiles at the lines of advancing riot police. A nearby police van was also reportedly damaged. Unfortunately, due to the lack of support, the small numbers, and intervention from a number of pathological pacifists, the police were eventually able to retake the barricades, and clear the streets. However, by this time, another line of non-violent had assembled behind the dismantled barricades and managed to keep the road closed a little while longer.

After this final blockade was cleared, and word was spread that most of the people who attended the debates managed to evacuate through an alternate route, people dispersed peacefully. Throughout the days events, thirty-six people were reportedly arrested, all of whom were charged with misdemeanors and released the next morning.

The Boston '03 demonstration, although unsuccessful at blocking the dignitaries' entrances and exits, was an enthusiastic display of growing unrest. The numbers were good, there was a fairly large militant presence (most visibly seen in the sizable anarchist black bloc), and the protesters showed their ability to cooperate and organize spontaneously when under pressure.



BOSTON -- The Community Church of Boston buzzed with activity on Saturday, October 21, as the second annual New England Anarchist Bookfair packed the place to capacity with people from all over the region. The day-long event was co-organized by the Sabate Anarchist Collective from Boston and anarchists from Worcester's Firecracker Infoshop, and brought in a few hundred anarchist activists as well as many new faces who took the opportunity to learn about anarchist history and theory as well as to learn

about current struggles to become involved in.

The church's large auditorium was lined with tables from vendors such as the Lucy Parsons Center, Wooden Shoe Books, Firecracker Infoshop, To Whom it May Concern Project and others. A large array of books, pamphlets, zines, pins, patches and other goodies were available, in addition regional activist organizations such as the Northeastern Federation of Anarcho-Communists, Leonard Peltier Defense Committee, Boston Philly Defense Group, the IWW, Boston Indy Media Center and many more provided free information about their organizations throughout the day.

Meanwhile, upstairs, a series of speakers

covered topics ranging from Histories of Revolutionary Anarchist Organization and Direct Action to the Role of Alternative Media in our activism and Creative Methods of Protest within the Anti-Globalization Movement. Cindy Milstein, of the Institute for Social Ecology, and Howard Erlich, of Social Anarchism, were two of the more prominent speakers who gave well received talks and then engaged the audience in discussion relating the topics to local struggles and actions. Musical entertainment, films, and a delicious vegan meal rounded out the successful event. We look forward to seeing everyone next year.

New York City's Anarchist Resurgence

NEW YORK - Coming out of the year that more or less began with the World Trade Organization protests in Seattle, New York's anarchist community is looking to raise its visibility and become a bigger part of the growing anti-capitalist movement. Since Seattle, New York anarchists have played an important part in organizing and providing mass support for the IMF/World Bank protests in Washington on April 16-17, the actions against the Republican National Convention on August 1, and a slew of local actions against anti-union employers, sweatshops, police brutality and in support of community gardens, political prisoners and undocumented workers.

Mostly this has been in partnership with other groups, especially the *NYC Direct Action Network*. But we're hoping to become a more visible part of area activism over the next year, through a new effort to create a local anarchist federation that can provide support services to the 20-30 anarchist groups now operating here. After two meetings to discuss building this new federation, we expect it will help us to organize for the upcoming Anti-Capitalist Convergence in Quebec City in April as well as to better address such large issues as diversity within the anarchist movement.

The new federation effort was partly prompted by the realization that New York anarchists have had a hard time pulling together on projects. This was particularly apparent when *Blackout Books*, our local infoshop/bookstore and meeting space, closed this summer. "Skyrocketing rents on the Lower East Side are one problem, making a neighborhood

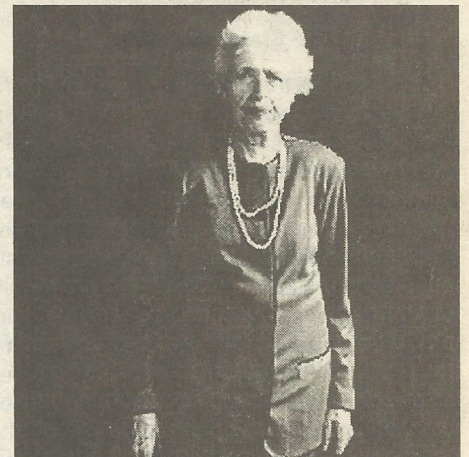
that's long been a favorite anarchist hangout unaffordable for any but well-heeled yuppies," says Seth of *Blackout*. Another was inability to get the word out and assemble support from the anarchist community, however. *Blackout* still operates some book-shelf space at *Soft Skull-Shortwave Bookstore* at 107 Norfolk Street, and the collective is looking for volunteers to help with its website (including a potential on-line bookstore), a future monthly reading and lecture series, and other projects. For info, see www.panix.com/~blackout, or write to *Blackout Books*, PO Box 250465, Columbia Station, New York NY 10025.

A more promising development is the founding of a New York chapter of *Ya Basta!*, the Italian support group for the Zapatista EZLN which took the activist world by storm at a bioengineering conference in Genoa earlier this year and then to great effect in Prague. *Ya Basta!* put their bodies on the line - fashionably clad in white chemical suits padded out with inner tubes and topped by gas masks - by directly confronting police in opposition to neoliberalism and the IMF/World Bank. If you're interested in joining or in starting *Ya Basta!* chapters in other cities, check out our Web site at www.freespeech.org/yabasta and join our listserve.

Ya Basta! took part in the December 10 march and rally in support of clemency for American Indian Movement activist Leonard Peltier, as part of a large anarchist contingent from all over the country. Four comrades were arrested, unprovoked, by New York police, and with the help of *NYC-DAN*, we staged a spontaneous rally in support of the arrestees in front of Manhattan's 13th Precinct.

The four comrades were released next morning on charges ranging from disorderly conduct to "interfering with government function".

Less than two weeks later, we showed our solidarity for the last time with a great friend and longtime member of the New York anarchist community, Clara Solomon. Clara died at 87 on December 20. An accomplished pianist, teacher, and a social revolutionary to the core, she was the daughter of Samuel Freedman, of the famed anarchist paper the *Freie Arbeiter Shtimme*. Growing up primarily in the Stelton anarchist colony in Piscataway, New Jersey, and educated in its experimental Modern School she remained active in the movement from childhood. Clara was a mentor to young anarchists and most recently helped found the *Atlantic Anarchist Circle*. She's survived by her husband Sidney, also a longtime activist. We'll miss her a lot, but she lived to see a hopeful time dawning for anarchism that we will carry forward.



Clara Solomon 1913-2000

Protest, Political Repression, and the 'Timoney 3' by Rico

PENNSYLVANIA -- New year, new struggles. The movement is looking towards the future. For most people involved, last summer's Republican National Convention protests are history, a mere afterthought to Seattle.

Many activists have received probationary sentences, or had their charges dropped and moved on with their lives. This is not to say that there aren't people in Philly and elsewhere who are working hard on the RNC's aftermath. But a lot of valuable momentum has been lost. And for the Timoney 3, and others still stuck with felony charges, momentum could mean the difference between prison, or life on the outside.

Philly in Context

The political repression stemming from R2K can be seen as part of an overall agenda to set the limits for dissent following Seattle. The goal was to crush the movement and take away all incentive to protest by imposing a great risk of physical violence or jail time. In many ways, this served to radicalize more people, who were able to see first hand what the most oppressed segments of society see everyday--how the state really works. With each successive national protest, certain patterns emerged. In April, at the anti-IMF demos, the police played a preemptive role: preventive detentions, mass arrests before the major actions began, and raids on the convergence center. At the OAS protests in Windsor and the Democratic Convention in LA, police took the level of brutality up a notch.

Philly was significant in two ways: people were subjected to physical torture in jail, and, in a clearly political move, the DA's office levied astronomical bails, and egregious charges for low-level misdemeanors.

The State's Strategy

The plan is a three-tiered one: the high profile cases of people like Kate Sorensen and John Sellers are an attempt to set a ceiling for what kind of damage can be inflicted. No one expects these charges to stick. The lower-level charges represent the bare minimum the state would like to impose for simple protest.

Where the state is attempting to get a solid victory is with the felony cases. These are arguably the most important cases to come out of Philly. However, they have gotten almost no media attention, and have received no where near the type of solidarity that will be required if those involved are to remain free.

The 'Timoney 3'

On August 1, Camilo (Camille) Vivieros, Darby Landy, and Eric Steinberg were arrested and charged with attacking police officers with bicycles (the cops had been using the bikes to beat protesters). All had bails set in the \$500,000 range. Vivieros was charged with giving an officer a concussion, and attacking Police Commissioner John Timoney, and faces up to sixty years of potential jail time. A few of his charges were initially dropped, but Timoney and DA Lynne Abraham have personally petitioned to have them reinstated.

The 'Timoney 3' were arrested in the midst of a police riot. John Timoney had been riding high on photo ops and salutary press coverage. He had been strutting around the city accompanied by the press. The Commissioner's presence on the ground was the equivalent of a general going into the field and engaging in a little hand-to-hand combat for the cameras.

Timoney's tough guy routine was simple. He informed the Washington Post of his strategy for dealing with demonstrators: "You just have to keep one hand around one of their throats" (8/3/00). If Timoney was really attacked by the unarmed demonstrators, the media would have jumped all over the footage long ago, in an effort to build public support against the defendants. Shots of brave Timoney fending off the attacking mob would have been all over the news, and the three would have been tried immediately. Instead, the prosecution has chosen the insidious strategy of postponing the trial--potentially it could be stalled until late 2001.

This has taken quite a toll on the defendants, who are trying to get on with their lives, and simultaneously build support for their cases. The strain has been particularly severe for Vivieros, who has been prevented from his work as a full-time organizer for the Massachusetts Alliance for HUD Tenants.

Problems for the Defense

Unfortunately, the felony cases are forced to follow a strategy of proving their innocence on technical grounds. Its no secret that some movement lawyers refused to take their cases, or demanded fees so high that they would have been impossible to raise. The movement is not strong enough to make the case that the accused are only guilty of not exercising their legitimate right of self-defense against violent cops. This needs to be acknowledged in light of the fact that Timoney and his cops had been attacking protesters for the past two days; that Timoney used state police and right wing spies like the notorious

John Rees to get around an injunction preventing his force from infiltrating the protestors.

Timoney

Timoney played a major role in Rudy Giuliani's "Quality of Life" program in New York City, which entailed a crack down on blacks, Latinos, the homeless, panhandlers, and other layers of the "criminal element." His calls for a McCarthyite investigation of the movement make him that much more formidable, a unique juncture where political and social repression meet. At the same time, his police force is extremely brutal and unaccountable. Complaints of police abuse have reached record levels during his tenure. According to the Philadelphia Inquirer, reports to the city's Police Advisory Commission for fiscal year 2000 were "the most the commission had received in a single year." Similarly, when Timoney was second in command in NYC, civilian complaints rose about 50% in communities of color. Timoney's then boss, William Bratton, notes in his autobiography, Turnaround, that he faced a crisis trying to figure out "How could we do what Timoney said was needed without kicking guys in the balls?" (p. 245).



John Timoney. Asshole.

Timoney has mostly ignored the recommendations of the Police Advisory Commission. Of the 13 recommendations and 17 opinions the commission has issued, Timoney has implemented one, a meager one day suspension. (Philadelphia Inquirer, 11/17/00, AP, 11/17/00). The Advisory Commission's Director, Hector Soto has called Timoney's behavior "An attack on the concept of our commission" (Philadelphia Weekly, 11/29/00).

According to Amnesty International's June 1998 report on the NYPD, in 1994--the first year that

Timoney was second-in-command—the city saw "a 34% increase in civilians shot dead." In the same year, there was also a "53.3% increase in civilians shot dead in police custody" (Amnesty International, Police Brutality in the NYPD).

The cops have attempted to divide us from the start, and in many ways, have been aided by some from within our ranks. Some failed to see the importance of the felony cases, others actually disavowed them because of the nature of their charges. This is dangerous. Even the courts ostensibly accept people as "innocent until proven guilty."

How can we maintain the maximum degree of solidarity with people with whom we have many differences over tactics? Consider John Sellers' statements in the Philadelphia Daily News, in an attempt to distinguish between "violent," and "nonviolent" protestors: "*Ruckus condemns the use of vandalism or property destruction in a political protest. We've never advocated the use of vandalism by other organs.*" He is also

quoted as saying "*It wasn't very hard to tell who was smashing glass out here last Tuesday...if they wanted to arrest those people, they would have arrested those people. They chose to target nonviolent protestors, organizers, and folk who were standing on the streets in acts of conscience.*" Marcuse claimed that, in such a context "*preaching nonviolence on principle reproduces the existing institutionalized violence.*"

Political repression in the US has always served several functions. Aside from the obvious job of crushing threats to power it has a dampening effect on the consciousness of those not directly involved. After the upheaval and counter-attack by the state in the late sixties, American society saw what Stuart Hall refers to as "*not a temporary and passing rupture, but a prolonged and continous state of semi-siege.*" This was a period whose "*meaning and causes then, and its consequences since have been neither fully reckoned with, or liquidated. The*

political polarization which it precipitated fractured society into two camps: authority, and its 'enemies'. This spectacle mesmerized the right, the center, and the apolitical, precisely because it refused to assume the recognized forms of classical class conflict and the politics associated with it. But it also marked the left; and its legacies remain, active and unexorcized in the spectrum of radical and revolutionary politics to this day." Which leads us to ask our comrades within the movement, 'which side are you on'?

The new year will present a lot of new challenges, and hopefully some real victories. If this movement continues to grow in numbers and effectiveness, the repression wheeled out by the state will only get worse. Now's the time for us to make sure that the repression is met with new forms of resistance. We must also push for increased support for all felony cases and political prisoners. If these problems aren't addressed now, they could destroy us in the future.

Anarchy in Mobtown

BALTIMORE -- The following is a report of some of the things going on and groups that are active in Baltimore. Some things are no doubt missed, but it is a decent start as far as the basics of what Anarchists are doing in Mobtown.

Black Planet Books - Anarchist bookstore and infoshop (in the process of collectivizing). They hold some events, and many groups meet there. There is always free coffee, and info on what's going on around town. Upstairs they are opening office spaces for various activist / anarchist groups in the city. They are just off of Broadway heading west on Fleet St. in Fells Point. (410) 563-2008; Email: blakplanet@aol.com

Claustrophobia - Baltimore anarchist paper, to order a copy send \$3 to Claustrophobia, P.O. Box 1721, Baltimore, MD 21203. The paper is free in Baltimore! Email: clastro@cham.net; Web: <http://www.cham.net/~clastro/>

Social Anarchism - Long standing anarchist journal. They are looking for two more people to join the collective this winter. They are working on the spring issue and are open to articles of interest to the anarchist movement. Social Anarchism, 2743 Maryland Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21218; Email: socialanarchism@nothingness.org; Web: www.nothingness.org/sociala/

Agitate! - Agitate! Collective is one of two affiliates to the Northeastern Federation of Anarcho-Communists (NEFAC), working on several projects and organizing many different educational and fun events usually as fund raisers for different projects. We will be organizing workshops around the anti-FTAA demos in Quebec City, as well as doing local

propaganda specifically anti-capitalist oriented. Email: agitate_baltimore@hotmail.com

Baltimore Books to Prisoners - One of the projects initiated by Agitate!. Gives free books to those incarcerated by the State. We are setting up an office/workspace in Black Planet at the moment, and working on fundraising events. Email: bookstoprisoners@yahoo.com; Books to Prisoners / AGITATE! PO Box 5632, Lutherville MD 21094

Maryland Anti-Racist Action are busy with two projects right now. Firstly they are setting up an Eastern Seaboard user friendly ARA website. The idea is to better link the east coast ARA chapters. The second is that they are setting up a foundation outside their chapter, with non profit status, that will be designed to go into public schools and do diversity training. For more information, contact: ARA MD, PO Box 5622, Lutherville MD 21094

Wimmin Take Control Collective - This is a specifically anarcho-feminist group, bringing wimmins issues and gender inequities into view within our movement, communities, and world. They are working on a website and producing literature to table. Email: wimmin_take_control@night-mail.com (or contact c/o AGITATE!)

Collective Action Notes - worker struggle oriented newspaper, comes out two or four times a year. PO Box 22962, Baltimore, MD 21203; Email: cansv@igc.apc.org; Web: www.geocities.com/capitolhill/lobby/2379

WMOB - Free Radio Baltimore - Best bet would be to contact the IWW about what's going on with these folks. I know there is some crossover. Last I heard they were waiting to see if they could get a low power licensing permit.

Food Not Bombs - serves Sundays at Thames St. Park in Fells Point at 3 PM

IWW (Baltimore GMB) - Although not specifically Anarchist, many of their members are. They have been involved supporting various labor struggles in Baltimore in the past and present, and members are involved with WMOB Free Radio Baltimore. P.O. Box 18637, Baltimore, MD 21216; Email: bltgmb@iww.org; Web: <http://www.jones.iww.org/gmb/>

Roundhouse Collective / Insubordinate - Roundhouse is the other of Baltimore's affiliates to the NEFAC. Insubordinate is a weekly workers discussion group held at Black Planet.

Some Baltimore anarchists have also been meeting about setting up a collectively run cafe / vegan diner. The idea is to create and open space with a library for events and just to hang out. There is also talk of setting up of a Baltimore IMC (which would be an much needed venture here! We have <http://www.mobtown.org> but it isn't updated as often as it should be!)

One thing I should note, is that right now in Baltimore there is a serious threat of fascist boneheads roaming about. At last count the most seen in one place was 24. We know they are Confederate Hammer Skins, and we know they are serious. There have been several confrontations with them (cheers to the Baltimore Anti-Racist Skins for giving them a good kicking!), and we know there will be retaliation. Black Planet Books has had its windows smashed out, and several Baltimore Anarchists are on their hit list.

For the most part Baltimore has been in hibernation since A16 of earlier this year, getting our groups steady and set. But things are coming together, and different groups are starting to see the benefits of working more closely together which shows promise for the anarchist scene in this city.

Keep Warm, Protect the Earth - Burn Out The Rich!

NEW YORK - In an age where affluent communities are continually expanding and decadent indifference reigns (while countless millions live in poverty and the environment is threatened at every level), how can anyone with a social conscience not find reason to celebrate when the houses of the rich are burnt to the ground?

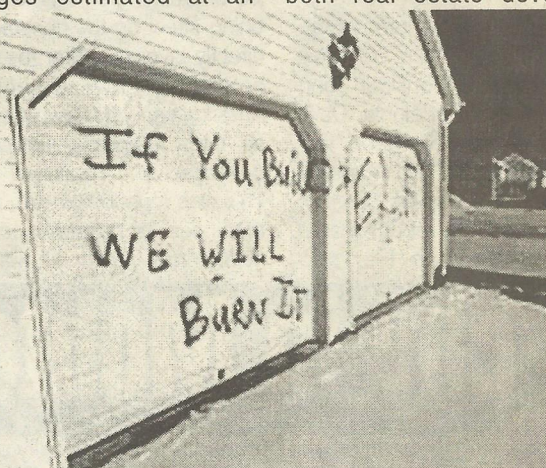
In recent months, the mischievous militants from the underground Earth Liberation Front (ELF) have carried out no less than 10 actions attacking urban sprawl on Long Island, with damages estimated in the millions of dollars. During the early morning hours of December 1, unidentified members of the ELF descended upon a development site in Middle Island, leaving a massive trail of property destruction in their wake. Over 200 windows were smashed in newly erected luxury houses, survey stakes were pulled up in an effort to delay plans to clear-cut the area, and twelve vehicles (bulldozers, backhoes, etc.) were all sabotaged. Three weeks later, another action was carried out where the group claimed responsibility for burning down a house under construction in Miller Place, Long Island. A communiqué was sent by ELF, which stated: "There are over 6 billion people on this planet, of which almost a third are either starving or living in poverty. Building homes for the

wealthy should not be a priority."

On December 29, politically motivated arson claimed four more newly built luxury homes at the Island Estates in Mount Sinai, with damages estimated at an astonishing \$4 million. Scrawled on one of the houses in red paint were the words "If you build it, we will burn it" and "Burn the Rich!". The accompanying communiqué read: "Recently, hundreds of houses have been built over much of Mount Sinai's picturesque landscape and developers now plan to build a further 189 luxury houses over farms and forests adjacent to Island estates," and finished by stating, "The earth isn't dying, it's being killed, and those who are killing it have names and addresses. What are you doing for the earth tonight? No compromise in defense of our earth! Stop urban sprawl or we will." Another action attributed to ELF was carried

out on January 16, once again in Middle Island, as fire was set to construction equipment in protest of urban sprawl.

As the arsons increase in frequency, both real estate developers and local (assisted by federal) authorities alike have been pressed to come up with any information leading to the arrest of anyone involved in the recent Long Island ELF actions. A local builders' association has offered a \$10,000 reward for the arrest of those responsible



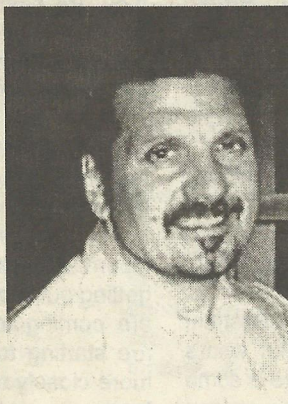
The Earth Liberation Front leaves its calling card for yuppie developers: "If you build it, we will burn it!"

for the vandalism, and both local police and a federal 'anti-terrorist' task force have been investigating the incidents. Recently, the house of a 17-year old high-school student was raided, and computer, files, literature and other materials were all seized. Despite this raid, no conclusive evidence was found that would identify the suspected youth with any ELF activities.

Political Prisoner Transferred to Walpole State Prison

MASSACHUSETTS -- United Freedom Front (UFF) political prisoner Jaan K. Laaman was transferred from the Federal Prison at Leavenworth, Kansas, to the state prison in Walpole, Massachusetts. He has been sent there to serve time stemming from a conviction for engaging in a fire fight with Massachusetts State Troopers. This move was very abrupt and unexpected to Jaan and his supporters. Because Jaan had been at Leavenworth for so long, he wants people to know that he has been moved, and to let others know of his new mailing address. Because he is now in a state prison, he has been issued a state prison

identification number, and his previous federal prison ID number is no longer valid. If you maintain a PP/POW list, please update his address and ID# so that he may continue to hear from supporters. His new contact information is: **Jaan Laaman #W41514, Box 100 / MCI Cedar Junction, South Walpole, MA 02071**



Jaan K. Laaman

Laaman is an anti-imperialist Political Prisoner who was imprisoned for being a member of the United Freedom Front (which carried out armed actions against apartheid, imperialism and war in the 80's), involvement in firefights with police forces, and weapons charges. In the 1960's Jaan worked in Students

for a Democratic Society, fighting against the Vietnam War and racism. He was also involved in labor and community organizing. This included organizing youth along with the Black Panther Party and Young Lords (a revolutionary Puerto Rican Organization). In 1972 he was charged with bombing Nixon's reelection headquarters and a New Hampshire police station and was sentenced to 20 years. After winning an appeal and getting some of his sentence cut, he was released in 1978. In 1979, he and his comrade Kazi Toure helped to organize the Amandla Festival of Unity to support freedom in Southern Africa, which featured Bob Marley. This concert helped to fight racism in Boston, where it was held, and raised money to send to freedom fighters in South Africa. Jaan later went underground and joined the armed clandestine movement. He was captured in 1984, along with other members of the 'Ohio 7', and charged with Seditious Conspiracy. His sentence totals 98 years.

Institute for Social Ecology: Popular Education for a Free Society

Social Ecology - n. 1: a coherent, radical critique of current social, political and anti-ecological trends; 2: a reconstructive, ecological, communitarian, and ethical approach to society

VERMONT -- The Institute for Social Ecology (ISE), located amid central Vermont's rolling mountains, has been a center for education and action based on the ideas of social ecology since the 1970s. The ISE and its programs also serve as a forum for serious dialogue among ecological, social justice and anti-capitalist activists, as a laboratory for new ecological technologies, and as a resource for community groups around the world.

For the summer of 2001, the ISE is again offering its two widely acclaimed programs: Sustainable Design, Building, and Land Use, followed by Ecology and Community. As well, the ISE is offering for the first time two new summer programs: Arts, Activism, and Social Change Workshop, and for alumnae of these courses, Continuing Studies in Social Ecology.

Sustainable Design, Building, & Land Use, June 1 - June 22

Using the ISE's 50-acre site as a laboratory, we will explore design principles and practical skills that can be applied to any task: a building, a garden, an orchard, or a campus while fostering a critical understanding of the social and political contexts in which these projects may be applied. There will be demonstrations, hands-on projects, and discussions on:

* *History of agriculture* * *Layout and design principles* * *Social ecology and design* * *Organic agriculture* * *Drawing and drafting* * *Appropriate technology* *

Estimating environmental costs * *Alternative building* * *Mapping and surveying* * *Permaculture and Ecological restoration* *

Forest ecology Arts, Activism, & Social Change Workshop, June 8 - June 17

This nine-day intensive workshop is intended for artists and activists looking to gain practical experience with designing and composing activist art projects. Over the course of the workshop, participants will receive hands-on experience and instruction in creating a wide array of activist art, including puppetry, dance, street theater, installation art, songwriting, murals, culture jamming, and web-based art. As one of the principal goals of the workshop is to help participants find coherence in their political objectives, four mornings will be devoted to a lecture series introducing some of the ideas of social ecology and its practical applications. Participants will also be presented with historical and theoretical perspectives on the intersection of art and politics, and will discuss different strategies for engaging diverse communities through art.

Ecology and Community, June 23 - July 21

This month-long, intensive residential learning experience offers workshops and practica in the field of social ecology. Participants will study and live together in a community setting that reflects the ISE's belief in self-reliance, democracy, and participation. There are a variety of educational activities, from studies on activist history and strategies, to philosophical explorations of society and nature, to work in the gardens.

Courses include:

* *Understanding Capitalism: Global Perspectives* * *Ecological Movements and Social Activism* * *Feminism and Ecology* * *Radical Agriculture and Ecological Technology* * *Toward Directly Democratic Communities* * *Public Education and Community Action* *

Continuing Studies in Social Ecology, August 3 to August 12

The Continuing Studies in Social Ecology offers advanced studies within the field of social ecology for returning students. This program is broken down into two streams: "Economics, Philosophy, & Politics in the Age of Globalization" and "Intensive Studio in Planning & Design".

ISE / Burlington College B.A. Degree in Social Ecology

Burlington College, in collaboration with the ISE, offers a B.A. in an individualized major in social ecology for upper level students.

The Institute for Social Ecology was established in 1974 and incorporated in 1981 as an independent institution for the purposes of education, research, and outreach in the field of social ecology. For over a quarter of a century, ISE has inspired individuals involved in numerous social change movements to work toward a directly democratic, liberatory, and ecological society. The educational programs of the Institute for Social Ecology have served more than 2,000 students around the world.

For further information on our programs, feel free to contact: ise@sover.net or visit our web site at <http://www.social-ecology.org/>

Montreal Anarchist Book and Freedom Fair

-- Saturday, May 19, 2001 --

10am to 6pm

1710 rue Beaudry

(metro Beaudry, between de
Maisonneuve and Ontario)
Montreal, Quebec, CANADUH

Books, zines, journals, pamphlets, posters, archives art, music, poetry, spoken word, videos, archives, workshops, speakers, panels, debates, conferences, discussions and more ...

Participants from all over Montreal, Quebec and Canada, as well as from France, San Francisco, New York, Detroit, Boston and elsewhere. Over 50

book and zine tables. Hundreds and hundreds of participants. Much more to be confirmed ...

Admission is free, and childcare is available on request. The main bookfair space is wheelchair accessible. Translation available in English and French.

For more information, or to get involved:

tel: 514-526-8946

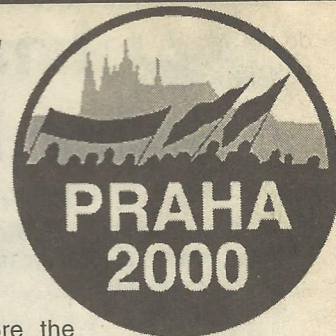
e-mail: lombrenoire@tao.ca

web: <http://www.tao.ca/~lombrenoire>

post: 2035, St-Laurent Boulevard, 2nd floor
Montreal, Quebec
H2X 2T3 CANADUH



Anti-Capitalist Resistance in the Streets of Prague



CZECH REPUBLIC - On September 26, as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) held their annual summit in

strategic differences between protesters, most agreed that their actions had been effective in achieving the stated goals of shutting down the summit and bringing the destructive policies of the World Bank and IMF to the attention of the world. And, of course, beyond Prague, the spirited resistance of anti-capitalist protest was echoed in over 30 countries around the world as thousands of people participated in the S26 global day of action against capitalism. As with past global days of action, it was demonstrated once again that resistance to capitalism is, and will continue to be, as

press ignore the reality of these free market reforms and the economic consequences they have had for the majority of the Czech population.

In 1990, the then Czechoslovak government took a \$3.9 billion loan from the IMF under conditions that the government promise to liberalize and restructure the national economy. The European Union also pressured Czech governments to take loans from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development under the same conditions. The Czech Republic is just one of many countries which have been forced to implement this policy of liberalization, deregulation, privatization, high interest rates and cuts in public spending - a policy which is in the interests of transnational corporations, formulated by imperialist states in the World Trade Organization (WTO) and which is imposed by IMF and World Bank on developing countries.

Now, ten years later, the results of this neoliberal agenda are clear. Since 1989, working class families' real income has dropped by 13% (farmers by 28%). In 1997, the value of basic social benefits (education, health care, housing) had fallen 44%. Purchasing power of pensions is 10% lower than before the 'Velvet Revolution'. The real value of the minimum wage has decreased



Autonome Antifa contingent within the blue march

Prague, Czech Republic, demonstrations took place in dozens of cities across the globe as part of the fourth international day against global capitalism. In Prague, nearly 15,000 protesters gathered in the streets to confront this meeting of the world's economic elite, demonstrating a new heightened militancy for the anti-capitalist movement and resulting in some of the worst civil disorder the Czech city has seen since the 'Prague Spring' uprising of 1968.

For most of the day people were able to maintain blockades around the heavily guarded conference center, effectively preventing any of the delegates from leaving. Fierce street battles between riot police and hundreds of militant protesters resulted in 54 police being injured (along with a Japanese and Russian delegate), and an estimated \$2.5 million worth of property damage taking place. With Czech authorities unable to ensure the safety of delegates, only a few dozen of the 14,000 world bankers, economists, and financiers who came to Prague dared to attend the second day's meetings, and the final day of the summit was canceled altogether.

Even before the clouds of tear gas had cleared, the protests in Prague were declared a success. Despite tactical and

transnational as capitalism itself.

Neoliberal Capitalism and the Czech Republic

Bringing thousands of central bank heads, bureaucrats, and senior officials from 182 countries to Prague, the prestigious annual summit meetings of the IMF and World Bank were of great importance to the Czech ruling class, and the first such ever to be held in a country of the former Soviet Bloc. According to the international business press, the IMF and World Bank could not have chosen a better venue for their annual meetings than Prague, citing the Czech Republic as the beacon of post-Soviet free market reforms. Of course, as can be expected, the international business



One of many melees between protesters and police during S26

by 60% since 1991. 63% of workers receive lower than average wages. Unemployment has grown by 9% (in some regions it has reached 20%), and about 130,000 workers

do not receive their wages. Many schools, hospitals and public transport lines were closed down. Most recently, the IMF and World Bank have forced the Czech government to freeze wages in the public sector again, reduce social benefits (mainly for the unemployed), and further reform the Czech health care system, which was deemed "too excessive".

The Czech Republic is thus only another in the series of IMF and World Bank's successes. These are the successes for local and foreign capitalists, but for workers and the poor of the world, and for their environment, they mean total disaster.

Prologue To Prague

When the IMF and World Bank met last April in Washington, DC, over 20,000 people took part in massive demonstrations and disruptive actions against the two financial institutions. From the non-violent civil disobedience of groups affiliated with the Mobilization for Global Justice to the militant street confrontations of the Revolutionary Anti-Capitalist Bloc, these protests managed to set a precedence for the dramatic actions that would later take place in Prague.

Beyond these widely reported protests from the United States, resistance to the IMF and World Bank within the past year has been widespread, and hardly confined to wealthy industrialized nations.

According to *States of Unrest: Resistance to IMF Policies in Poor Countries*, a report published by the World Development Movement, there have been no less than 50 separate episodes of civil unrest in 13 poor countries in the past year, all directed at the IMF, and with at least half of these protests ending in violent clashes with the police or military. Jessica Woodroffe, co-author of the report said: "Attempts by the World Bank and IMF to dismiss protesters as 'rich students' are naive and insulting. Millions of people around the world have been brave enough to protest against IMF policies. From Argentina to Zambia, farmers, priests, teachers and trade unionists have called for an end to IMF imposed economic reforms".

As resistance to the neoliberal policies of the IMF and World Bank gathers momentum around the globe, civil unrest and riotous protest has become an increasingly commonplace occurrence. Accordingly, Czech authorities prepared for the worst case scenario during the Prague summit meetings. Over 11,000 police, assisted by 5,000 military personnel on standby, were deployed with orders to use brute force if necessary. Czech police advisors were

trained by the Washington Police Department during the April protests, and the FBI's newly opened legal attaché office in Prague (established for the purpose of "cooperative law enforcement efforts and information sharing," according to a Czech government spokeswoman.), along with Canadian and European security agencies, provided intelligence on "radical insurgents" expected to attend the demonstrations.

In addition to the massive police mobilization and advanced counter-intelligence operations, the government and capitalist media initiated a highly effective campaign of "anti-protester propaganda." For three months alarmist announcements were made in Czech newspapers and on television calling on Czech citizens to stay clear of protesters, obey the police, and, if possible, leave the city.

During the week prior to the demonstrations, hundreds of protesters were detained at the Czech border while police searched their vehicles and checked their passports against a master list of individuals labeled "persona non grata". A bus from the Netherlands carrying people from the Rampenplan activist kitchen was initially

denied entry into the Czech Republic, and only allowed through after substantial activist and media pressure. Over a hundred members of the Swedish 'Syndicalist Youth Federation' were held at the border for over 10-hours before they were granted entry, and a bicycle caravan from Hannover, Germany were detained overnight.

On Sunday, September 24th, a standoff which lasted over 24-hours took place at the Czech-Austrian border when 1,000 Italian activists coming by train from Venice were stopped, and four members of 'Ya Basta!' were denied entry. Rather than continue on without their four comrades, the remaining Italians built barricades on the train lines, thereby preventing the train's departure and effectively shutting down the whole train border crossing until the authorities would grant passage to everyone on board. Eventually the Italian ambassador to the Czech Republic was called, and only after he agreed to take the four activists being held by border police directly to the Italian embassy in Prague did the standoff end.

Neither State Capitalism nor Private Capitalism! For Freedom, Self-Management and Socialism!

Stalinism and state capitalism - so called communism - enslaved the countries of Eastern Europe for decades. Their Moscow controlled dictatorships plundered these countries for the benefit of an aristocratic class which controlled the state and which was every bit as contemptible as the aristocracies of the former monarchies.

Nowadays another dominating class of capitalists is on top. However the system of domination and exploitation remains the same. The majority of people are excluded from the 'progress' announced by private capitalism and the western leaders.

The current International Monetary Fund and World Bank meeting is a symbol of the control of the international financiers and bosses of global companies over the countries of the former Soviet Bloc. This globalization is based on the globalization of the exploitation of workers. Capitalism is the system that ensures maximum benefits for a tiny number of the world's people by imposing misery, joblessness, insecurity and a degraded life on all the rest of us.

We revolutionary anarchists and anarchist communists have no interest in who forms this dominating class. We fight against the very existence of this over privileged class that exists to the cost of the world's population. More and more people believe that capitalism is not inevitable - in London, Seattle, Washington, Davos, Millau and now Prague more and more people reject the rule of the market.

We want a society based on equality, a class less society in which everyone contributes to the overall wealth according to their abilities and from which everyone receives according to their needs. We want a free society that is really democratic in all areas of life. This includes democracy in the workplaces, where decisions must be made by all wage earners. We want a society in which we all stand together, without borders.

Let us all stand together to radically change this current society.

signed,

Solidarita - ORA (Czech Republic); Alternative Libertaire (France); Workers Solidarity Movement (Ireland); Federation of Anarchist Communists (Italy); Bikisha Media Collective & Zabalaza Books (South Africa); Northeastern Federation of Anarcho-Communists / Federation des Anarcho-Communistes du Nord-Est (United States, Canada)

The Struggle Against Capitalism is Also a Struggle Against Fascism

On Saturday, September 23rd, as less than a hundred neo-nazis gathered for a rally on the outskirts of Prague, an estimated 1,500 people took to the streets for an anti-fascist march through the center of the city. Crowds of anti-fascists gathered to voice their opposition to capitalism, the IMF and World Bank, and the rising tide of racist and nationalist tendencies throughout Europe. As one speaker explained, "Our struggle is against both the State and capitalist economic system. The fascists on the streets and the organizers in the Congress Center are two parts of the same coin."

Dominated by anarchist flags and banners from at least 10 eastern and western European countries, and led by large groups of anti-fascists from the Czech Republic and Germany, the crowd made their way towards the meeting place of the neo-nazi rally across the city, which ended early in order to avoid inevitable confrontation. Although the march had not been given a permit by the authorities, police did nothing to impede it. Their presence was limited to directing traffic at intersections, and standing in a protective line in front of a McDonald's restaurant. The march ended in Wenceslaus Square at the statue of St. Vaclav and everyone dispersed peacefully.

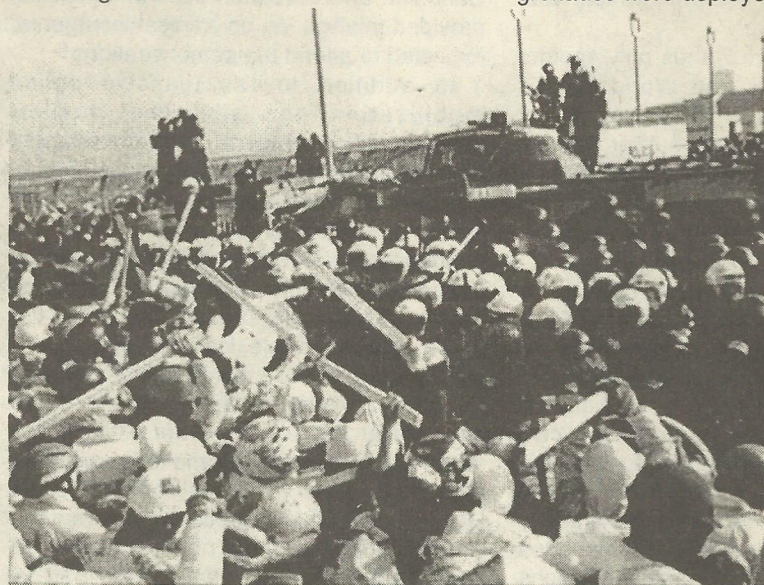
Later in the afternoon, as a number of fascist skinheads were returning from their rally they were attacked by a group of anarchists in a subway station and given a beating. It was reported that the skinheads were on their way to try and ambush people leaving the anti-fascist demonstration.

The Siege on the Congress Center Begins

After a week of activist trainings, workshops, small demonstrations, and a well-attended counter-summit on globalization, the day of action came. In the morning hours of Tuesday, September 26, thousands of protesters gathered at Namesti Miru, the public square near downtown Prague. The IMF/World Bank delegates were meeting at the Congress Center, located about a mile across town on a hill overlooking a valley. The main road access to the Center is the Nuselsky Bridge.

Organizers from the Initiative Against Economic Globalization (INPEG) had decided to allow the delegates into the conference center and then blockade it in order to prevent them from leaving and attending a special Opera that evening. The strategy of the day was that the march would split

into three color sections, blue would blockade the valley, yellow would blockade Nuselsky Bridge directly above the valley, and pink would go on a long march around the Congress Center to block the back exits. In addition, another group would attempt to blockade the hotels in the morning to delay the delegates.



Ya Basta! - "We act with our bodies. We refuse to be invisible!"

Both the yellow and blue contingents were headed up by groups who had stated their intention to push through the police lines. The yellow march was led by Italian and Spanish groups affiliated with the autonomous 'Ya Basta!' network, who were dressed in helmets, white foam-padded coveralls and carrying heavy shielding. The front of the blue march was taken up by Czech anarchists, followed by contingents of anarchists from Poland, Germany, Greece, Turkey, Spain, Hungary, Slovakia, Croatia, Britain, United States, and elsewhere. The pink march, which maintained a peaceful blockade behind the Congress Center until early evening, was made up of pacifists, environmentalists and the bulk of the Leninist parties.

Attack is the Best Means of Defense!

The anarchist blue march, which numbered nearly 5,000 participants, marched in tightly packed rows with arms linked and banners across the front and down the sides of the march. They moved down the valley separating the city from the Congress Center and were met by heavy police resistance. The majority of anarchists were masked up and prepared for confrontation, with many in the front wearing gas masks and helmets. Upon reaching the lines of riot police, groups of black bloc anarchists grabbed a metal bar-

rier and charged, touching off the first round of heavy street fighting. Row after row hurled themselves against the riot shields, before moving to the side for the next row to charge. The shield wall started to buckle and then eventually broke as people surged through the police lines. Teargas and concussion grenades were deployed and police charged

at protesters with riot clubs. Anarchist militants fought back with sticks, steel bars, bottles and cobblestones. As the police attacked with an armored water cannon and fired round after round of tear gas filled stun grenades, the front lines of the blue march were forced to make a brief retreat.

After regrouping, a second massive charge began, driving the police back before being again

driven back itself as police brought up two Armored Personnel Carriers and counter charged. Half a dozen or so molotov cocktails were hurled into the police lines which brought them to a halt. Several police were briefly set alight when a molotov cocktail exploded among them, but were quickly extinguished by their colleagues. It was reported that the engine of one of the personnel carriers was also set on fire, allowing someone to spraypaint a circle A on the front of it. Volleys of stun grenades and tear gas rained down, with the noise apparently interrupting the speeches inside the Congress Center. In the front lines, protesters could be seen wearing captured police helmets and wielding captured shields and batons.

Meanwhile, above the valley on the Nuselsky Bridge, the yellow march had reached the police lines. Protesters systematically dismantled the police barricades, cheered on by the crowd every time they removed a section of the metal barrier. However, they were unable to push back the police lines and inch their way onto the bridge. For more than three hours, dozens of 'Ya Basta!' militants with heavily padded body armor pushed against the police lines. Police responded with batons, while some protesters used inner tubes to shield themselves from then blows, and others counterattacked the police lines with large wooden sticks. At least one protester

gave the cops a taste of their own medicine by returning fire with a stolen canister of pepper spray. As the standoff between the protesters and police drew on, a number of Italians made one last assault on the police lines and dispatched the Ya Basta! Air Force, which comprised of hundreds of paper airplanes. In the end, attempts to reach the Congress Center via the bridge were abandoned, as it was thoroughly blocked by four armored personnel carriers, two water cannons and hundreds of heavily equipped riot police. Eventually, Ya Basta! and the yellow march left the bridge to join up with the other marches.

The pink march circled around the conference complex, and approached it from a rear access road where a non-confrontational blockade was maintained. Though the pink march was met with the least amount of resistance, there wasn't any real effort to break through the police lines. A small break-away 'pink and silver' contingent, headed by activists from Earth First! UK, caught the police by surprise and reportedly managed to occupy parts of the complex before being violently ejected and driven back.

Back at the blue march, a stalemate had settled along the barricade, with the police being driven back whenever they tried to cross it by stick wielding demonstrators and hails of now plentiful cobblestones. Some protesters tried to find their way to flank the narrow riot police front by going through thickly planted pine trees along the wall of the park. They were driven out as rounds of stun grenades and tear gas were fired into the trees. However, it was reported that further up in the park a group of about a hundred protesters succeeded in breaking down a door in the wall and getting within 100 feet of the conference center before

being chased back by riot police with dogs.

The bulk of the blue march was continuing a frontal assault on the police lines, but made little progress due to the water cannon. A gap opened up between the lines of riot police and the protesters as they tried to stay just out of water cannon range, occasionally dashing in to through volleys of cobblestones or paintbombs. The riot police managed to move into the gap, followed by the water cannon and reinforcements, and made a mass charge at the now retreating protesters. Barricades were erected on two access roads, and a train that had arrived on the railway line running parallel with the park at the bottom of the valley was stopped by protesters and effectively blocked. The windows of what appeared to be a bank or insurance company were smashed in, allowing for protesters to climb in and pass out materials to reinforce the barricades, one of which was set on fire to keep back the advancing police. As police eventually overtook the barricades, most people left the immediate area and made their way toward the Congress Center (while smashing up a delegates' limousine in the process) using an alternate route.

Surprisingly, despite the police helicopter

following overhead, the remnants of the blue march managed to get within a few hundred feet of the Congress Center, with only a single line of riot police between them and the summit meetings (it was later reported in the Czech

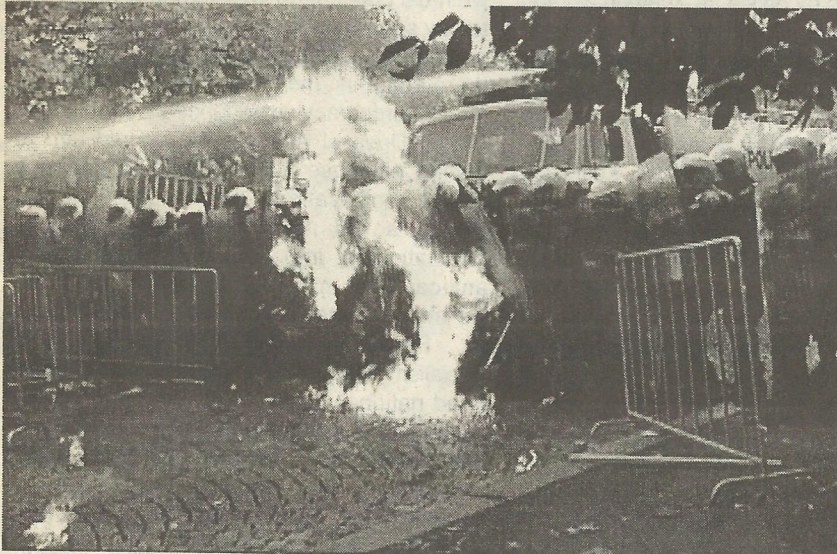


When peaceful protest just isn't enough...

media that by this point the police had become disoriented by the earlier mass assaults, and that their radio communications were sabotaged by unknown persons with professional scrambling equipment). Needless to say, the remaining 150 or so masked anarchists charged the thin police line, who quickly retreated. Those at the front of the blue march managed to find a way to the railway running under the bridge that the Yellow group were blockading. A number of anarchists made it onto the Congress Center grounds and proceeded to lob cobblestones at the building (breaking a few windows), and at the delegates watching from the balcony above (two delegates were reportedly injured). Hundreds of riot police and two water cannons immediately arrived on the scene. Rounds of tear gas and stun grenades were fired at retreating protesters.

Pitched battles between the police and the remaining participants in the blue march continued into the early evening. Another barricade was erected and set aflame, and the majority of protesters made their way for downtown in a large column which swelled to about 2,000 people. At the sides of the march groups of black bloc anarchists demolished the windows of banks as they were passed by, however the overall spirit of confrontation had faded into the joy of victory. Upon reaching Wenceslas Square, a McDonald's was trashed, as was a KFC, a Mercedes-Benz dealer and a number of banks (other smaller and local businesses were largely untouched).

At about this time, another section of the blue march and a few remnants of the other marches gathered at the Opera House to disrupt the reception and concert planned for the delegates. Dozens of Spanish anarchists stood on the steps shouting "No Pasaran!". The evenings events were promptly



Good thing they remembered to bring the water canons!

canceled, and police then charged the protesters and chased them all the way back into the city center. With the delegates back at their hotels, the police were determined to sweep the streets and violently arrest anyone resembling a demonstrator. Hundreds of riot police poured into Wenceslas Square, touching off more heavy rioting. The clashes continued until late in the night, resulting in hundreds of arrests,

ed. As the march began moving towards the police station, hundreds of police blocked the streets and forced the demonstration to disperse, arresting nearly 70 people.

Among the 859 protesters who were arrested during the two days of protests, most were denied food, water, phone calls, medical attention and legal representation. Additionally, a number of people faced

The Struggle Against Global Capitalism Continues...

Like Seattle, the resistance in Prague demonstrated the near-impossibility for capitalist leaders to hold a major summit without the threat of mass disruption. Despite the best efforts of over 11,000 heavily armed police (nearly a quarter of the Czech Republic's entire police force) and the militarization of the entire city, the summit meetings of the IMF and World Bank were forced to an abrupt end by the determined actions of anti-capitalist protesters. Only a few dozen of the estimated 14,000 delegates managed to attend the second day of summit meetings, and the final day had to be canceled altogether. As one World Bank delegate reported, "During the press conference the next day, they denied the protests were the reason. They actually said the reason was that things had run so efficiently that they were able to compress everything into two days. The press laughed at this." Clearly Prague should be celebrated as a victory.

So, where next for the anti-capitalist movement? If the struggle against global capitalism is to move forward, revolutionary anarchists will have the special task of not only radicalizing the present struggle, but also actively shifting the terms of struggle from protesting against the present to organizing for the future.

As Vadim Barak, from the Czech anarchist group 'Solidarita-Organizace Revolucnich Anarchistu' explains: "At the end of the day what counts is not a number of injured policemen, smashed McDonald's, or whether direct actions were non-violent or not, but the number of working class people at least partially won to our cause. I believe we must continue to involve ourselves in day to day social struggles around various issues concerning working class people, bringing there anarchist methods of direct action and direct democracy experienced during these Global Days of Actions. We should aim at uniting all those social struggles and use global mobilizations as opportunities for linking social movements and struggles internationally into a mighty revolutionary anti-capitalist movement. And everywhere we must agitate for an anarchist alternative of Freedom, Self-Management and Socialism. But for this end anarchists definitely need national (as well international) organizations with agreed politics and strategies and coordination networks to make their interventions more effective through agreed joint strategy, tactics and resistance. We need greater anarchist unity".



International anarchist contingent marches toward the Congress Center

and leaving the streets of Prague littered with bottles, rocks and empty tear gas canisters.

State Repression and Revolutionary Solidarity

Following the massive demonstrations and heavy street fighting of S26, police retaliated with unrestrained brutality and repressive force for the remainder of the IMF and World Bank summit. Police swept the city and anyone suspected of being a protester was indiscriminately chased down, searched, often beaten, and arrested. Police were assisted in their persecution by Czech fascists, who also chased and attacked anyone who looked like a protester, smashed up activist centers, and helped to beat activists while they were held in jail.

On the morning of Wednesday, September 27, an action was planned to blockade the entrances of the Hilton, where a number of delegates were staying. Though less than 50 participants took part in the action, they were met by an overwhelming show of force as riot police attacked them with tear gas and water cannons. Another demonstration of about 400 people gathered at Namesti Miru to speak out against the brutality of the Czech police and declare solidarity with the arrest-

extreme brutality, intimidation, and torture. It was reported that woman arrestees were strip-searched by male officers and sexually harassed. A number of people were handcuffed to walls and beaten, while others were thrown down flights of stairs or tear-gassed in their cells. Some individuals gave accounts of police taking them out to isolated areas around Prague, and beating them severely before transporting them to police stations. In one instance, after being severely beaten by police an Austrian woman attempted to escape by jumping from a second story window, resulting in a spine fracture, a broken hip and a shattered leg.

As reports about police repression and the brutal treatment of arrested protesters in Prague began to circulate, solidarity actions rapidly spread across Europe. Czech consulates were occupied in Barcelona, Spain and Bern, Switzerland; the offices of Amnesty International were occupied in Athens, Greece; a group of masked, black-clad anarchists smashed up the offices of a Czech travel bureau in Paris, France with baseball bats; a group of "tute bianche" militants occupied the Czech pavilion at the international exhibition of architecture in Venice, Italy; meanwhile, solidarity demonstrations took place in Germany, Sweden, Britain, Spain, and elsewhere.

Thousands of Korean Protestors Slam Asia-Europe Summit

KOREA -- Riot police and protesters battled amid demonstrations against the gathering of twenty-five Asian and European leaders on October 20th at the summit of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) in Seoul. The protesters numbered among thousands of labor, environmental and human rights activists who expected the Seoul meeting to strengthen economic globalization, restricting workers' rights and widening the gap between rich and poor nations.

"ASEM, which was established to overcome American supremacy, has been following in U.S. footsteps only for the sake of capitalistic gains, destroying the lives of laborers and people in third-world countries," the protesters said in a statement. The diversity of the coalition that made preparations for the demonstrations has surprised many here in Korea. Apart from over 130 social, labor, people's, and progressive movement organizations which form the Korean People's Action Against Investment Treaties and the WTO (KoPA) and the People's Rally Committee, student associations, the Korean Farmer's League and Korean anarchists declared their solidarity. Perhaps one of the aspects that distinguishes the struggle in Seoul from other similar struggles around the world, is the fact that major people's organizations and trade unions were actively engaged in the preparations for events from the start.

The government and police had announced several weeks before the meetings that all demonstrations would be prohibited around the conference site and had stationed 30,000 policemen to enforce a

one mile perimeter. Despite his repression actions began early in the day. In the morning the leadership of KoPA (Korean People's Action against Investment Treaties and the WTO) and the People's Rally Committee were barred by the police from delivering a letter to conference participants protesting the neo-liberal agenda of the Asia Europe Meeting.

Police violently pushed away the protestors using shields and clubs. The leadership conducted an immediate sit-in protest at the site, explaining to reporters the situation and declaring that since peaceful means are being blocked, "other means to deliver the people's voice" would have to be used. With such efforts being repressed, it did not take long for the direct actions to commence. Students took to the streets in an effort to draw the police away from the site of the summit meetings, blocking roads and intersections around the city. Over 3000 protesters gathered later in the morning for a rally jointly organized by KoPA and the People's Rally Committee to demand an end to plans for privatization of the public sector, a reduction of working hours and an end to the neo-liberal free trade order.

They started to march toward the conference site but were promptly blocked by some 3,000-riot police who stood guard in and around the rally site. Demonstrators hurled chunks of brick and wielded wooden sticks to counter riot police officers' baton blows. In the afternoon, 20,000 people gathered in Olympic Park for the largest rally of the day and another march toward the conference site followed, and again police blocked the march about a mile away from

the ASEM Tower. Tensions mounted as each side deliberated on what actions to take next. Intense discussions went on within the ranks on whether to push forward or call off the rally at the police blockade. However, in the end, the leadership of the organizing committee decided to call off the rally. Many participants remained at the blockade for an hour after the decision, refusing to move. But eventually people left the blockades to continue decentralized actions throughout the city. Rallies, running demonstrations in subway stations and scuffles with police continued late into the night as police



Protesting the ASEM meetings in Seoul

helicopters flew overhead monitoring the clashes. A number of injuries were reported.

The actions taken in Seoul were another sign that international resistance against globalization is truly 'international' and were also in direct contradiction of those who claim that re-structuring has succeeded in Korea. Sweeping economic reforms put into effect since an economic crisis forced South Korea to accept a 58-billion-dollar bailout from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in late 1997 have led to worsening labor conditions and cuts in social services. Events planned by the opposition to the summit focussed on raising awareness among the public about the effects that neo-liberal globalization, investment treaties, financial investment treaties, and harsh repayment obligations have on the people of the world.

Church, Fascism, and Police: The Alliance that Never Fails

ITALY -- Demonstrators confronted the church, fascism, and the police as they battled with riot policemen who were protecting a ceremony involving Pope John Paul II and Austrian Prime Minister Jorge Haider when they attempted to storm the ceremony.

The clashes, which are considered to be among the most violent in the Pope's 22 year reign, began when protestors stormed police barricades in order to gain access to St. Peter Square, where Haider was having a Christmas tree lighting ceremony with top ranking Vatican officials.

Large sectors of the crowd of approximately 3,000 people, mainly from leftist organizations,

including the well protected Tutti Bianche, attacked the police and the barricades with



Tutti Bianche militants prepare for confrontation

bricks, stones, and sticks, which were met by batons and tear gas from the riot police.

Five policemen were injured in the clashes and no details have been released as of yet as to injuries to demonstrators.

Meanwhile, Haider, who has already made repeated anti-semitic statements and has expressed a liking for Nazism once again showed his strong anti-semitic tendencies. After being told that Jewish shopkeepers were turning off their store lights in protest, he responded by saying, "If they want to save money on their electric bills, let them do it." No comment necessary.

No Business As Usual for Trans-Atlantic Business Dialog

CINCINNATI, OH - In the latest round of anti-globalization protests which have shadowed nearly every high level meeting of the world's capitalist elite in the past year, activists from all over the mid-west came to Cincinnati in order to voice their opposition to the annual meetings of the Trans-Atlantic Business Dialog.

In November 1995, the Clinton administration helped form the Transatlantic Business Dialogue (TABD) in a meeting arranged by erstwhile Commerce Secretary Ron Brown, where over 100 corporate executives from the US and EU convened in Seville, Spain to discuss issues of trade liberalization. From this initial meeting, the TABD has developed into a privately funded vehicle through which the CEOs from corporations such as Boeing, IBM, Time Warner, Proctor & Gamble and Ford are able to influence trade policies set by governments in Europe and the United States as well as the WTO, enabling it to remain at the forefront of efforts to eliminate barriers to trade based on human rights, labor rights, and environmental concerns.

As top business CEO's and government leaders from Europe and the U.S. gathered in Cincinnati, over 1,000 protesters took to the streets in a number of energetic marches, teach-ins, disruptive actions, and running street battles with police.

On Thursday, November 16th, around 500 people attended an anti-TABD press conference and teach-in held on Fountain Square. Later that evening, over 100 protestors gathered outside of the Music Hall, where a special performance by Cincinnati's Symphony Orchestra was planned for the TABD delegates. Two individuals managed to gain access to the Music Hall, where they unfurled a large banner which read "End Corporate Rule", and were subsequently arrested and charged with criminal trespassing and disorderly conduct. Despite a few barricades that were kicked over, demonstrators eventually left peacefully, as over two hundred police on motorcycles, horseback, and clad in riot gear cleared the scene.

Friday morning started off with a rally at Sawyer Point, where crowds of over 1,000 people gathered. At noon, demonstrators made their way through downtown in a permitted march that ended across the street from the Omni hotel where the TABD meetings were taking place.

As the permitted march ended, a group of 200-300 black bloc anarchists and other



Who's streets?

militant activists split off from the main march and made their way down 5th St. and Vine (between Fountain Sq. and the Omni). A number of people made use of the police barricades in order to establish a line across the intersection and keep the police at bay. As police assembled reinforcements around the barricades, people began to move eastward towards Sawyer Point. At 4th St. and Vine, a small scuffle broke out and police arrested two individuals and charged them with rioting. In an attempt to clear the intersection, riot police fired bean bag rounds and rubber bullets into the crowd. Tear gas was also deployed, as was pepper spray and other chemical irritants. A number of tear gas canisters were thrown back at the police lines, a few banks had their windows smashed in and were spraypainted with anti-capitalist slogans, and a number of trash cans were lit on fire and kicked into the streets by angered protestors. Eventually the police regained

control over the streets, surrounding large groups of demonstrators and forcing people to disperse in groups of four. A few individuals were arrested, and instances of police violence were reported.

Later that evening, protestors regrouped down at Union Terminal, where TABD delegates were dining in opulence with Ohio's governor. Between 300-500 people marched

in front of the terminal, and twice as many police cordoned off the area. Once again, shotguns and riot gear were prominently on display, as were two large buses, clearly anticipating mass arrests. Despite the earlier confrontations, the Union Terminal protest ended without incident.

Police ensured that Saturday's activities wouldn't take place without provocation,

forcing everyone who came to attend an afternoon rally in Fountain Square to pass through police checkpoint. Police were everywhere, holding groups of demonstrators behind barriers, searching them for weapons, and arresting a number of people for "jaywalking". Eventually, nearly 700 people manage to gather on the Square and an attempt was made to march through downtown. Police surrounded the march and made an order to disperse, declaring the gathering an "illegal assembly". Tear gas was deployed, and people retreated into smaller groups.

After the main march and rally dissipated, protestors organized a second rally, along with members of the Black Urban Defense, in order to speak out against police brutality. This final action of the week had tremendous local significance, as allegations of homicide swirl around the Cincinnati Police Department after a young black man recently died in police custody. The plan was to march from the park up to the Hamilton County Justice Center. Of course, with the official TABD protests finished and the media spotlight no longer focussed on Cincinnati, the police felt free to hand out harsh treatment with impunity. By the day's end, police arrested 47 protestors, bringing the three-day total to 53.

"Whether it is the TABD or another global capitalist structure, our opposition is the same, we stand with indigenous people and the working class the world over against the facade of 'improvements' on global capitalism; capitalism cannot be improved, it must be destroyed. We stand for a bright future, when the fruits of the world's labor are used for the needs of the people that do the producing. Capital is globalized; the resistance of the working class must be as well."

-- "A Call for Anti-Capitalist Action in Cincinnati, OH for N16" statement"

Food Riots Spread Across Zimbabwe

ZIMBABWE -- From October 16-18th, riots erupted through out the Tafara townships, 19 miles east of Harare, in an angry protest against Zimbabwe's soaring food prices. Barricades were erected and witnesses said some roads had been scrawled with messages calling on residents to stay at home to show anger over the mismanagement of the economy by Robert Mugabee, Zimbabwe's ruler since the former Rhodesia gained independence from Britain 20 years ago. People rampaged through eastern Harare, looting several shops and torching a bus in the eastern suburb of Mabvuku. Harare's largest bakery said three of its trucks were looted of 5,000 loaves of bread. Roads were strewn with rubble, broken glass and spent tear-gas canisters. "The people have had enough. They all hate (leader Robert) Mugabe," a waiter in a Harare restaurant said. One rioter, a youth who identified himself only as Ephraim, said: "We have no jobs. We are hungry. We have nothing to eat. Yes, we are looting." More than 130 people were arrested for "public violence."

Harare district police Commander

Faustino Mazango told state radio that protesters had angered police by re-erecting barricades after streets had been cleared.

"The patience of the police could run out, and there could be fatalities if youths go on erecting barricades," he said. The last food riots, triggered in 1997 by a 25 percent increase in the price of corn meal, left five people dead after Mugabe deployed troops to end civil unrest. Already, soldiers and para-



Children celebrate amidst civil unrest in Harare

military units were patrolling the poorest neighborhoods. As part of a so-called national reaction force, armored personnel carriers fanned out from an infantry barracks north of the capital and were sent only to "problem

areas" in impoverished districts, said a police spokesman.

The riots came about as Zimbabwe is suffering its worst economic crisis since independence in 1980, with inflation at a record 70 percent and unemployment above 50 percent. Fewer than one in two of the

workforce have a job. The farming industry, the backbone of the economy, is on its knees, government coffers are bare, fuel is scarce and the Zimbabwe dollar is sinking steadily, making imports increasingly expensive. Last week, the government announced 30 percent hikes in

the prices of bread, sugar and soft drinks. The new higher prices followed a series of increases in the cost of gasoline, milk and corn meal -- a staple food in the country as well as increased bus and taxi-vans fares.

Anarcho-Syndicalist Murdered in Madrid

SPAIN -- In the mid-afternoon of today, Sunday, in the Atocha railway station, while Emilio Mejia and his brother, Juan, both workers in the building industry and members of the CNT's Industrial Builders Workers Federation, were handing out flyers as part of the campaign against the Labor Reform, one of them was attacked, without having given any sort of provocation at all, by an individual who was given a flyer.

The aggressor, apparently a tramp, after exclaiming, "this is a piece of shit," and witnessed by the customers and waiters of the cafeteria where the events took place, hit him and knocked him to the ground, fleeing immediately. A friend of the aggressor was retained by a union member and has been identified. The media have reported that the attacker is a drunk beggar who later turned himself into the police.

The victim, who did not have a chance to defend himself, entered the Madrid Doce de Octubre Hospital in a state of clinical death. He died late Sunday evening.

The Spanish CNT website is at <http://www.cnt.es>. From there you can send messages of support.

Partial Legal Victory for Czech Anti-Fascists

CZECH REPUBLIC - On January 9th the first phase of a three-year long legal and political battle between the anarchist/anti-fascist movements and capitalist injustice in the Czech Republic ended, surprisingly, in almost total victory. A Zlin City Court acquitted eight out of eleven defendants in what came to be known as the "Zlin Ten" trial. The remaining three received conditional sentences, very minor compared to those sought by the State prosecutor, which ranged up to several years in high security prisons. The prosecutor immediately appealed to the High court.

Eleven anarchist and revolutionary anti-fascists from the eastern part of the Czech Republic were charged with "heavy health injury, committed in an organized group under ideological pretext." The trial began in the spring of 1997 when a group of some 15 Zlin neo-nazis, armed and well-organized, most with the fascist "Patriotic Front," tried to attack a local pub often frequented by anarchists and anti-fascists. The antifascists, however, defended themselves and fought back, leaving one fascist seriously wounded. Alerted by the pub owner, police hastened to the scene and arrested the well-known local anarchist militants, including some that were not present at the time of the incident. Among the arrested

was David Srott, 22, a metalworker, dedicated militant of the FSA-IWA and a principle anarchist activist in the eastern Czech Republic, who, due to his political activities, has been a constant target of police repression.

The Czech Anarchist Black Cross, an integral working group of the FSA-IWA, has monitored the case since its inception, acquired counsel for the defense, paid expenses and organized an international protest campaign against the "Zlin Ten" trial. Materials on the trial have appeared throughout the international anarchist press, resulting in hundreds of protest letters, faxes and e-mails sent to Czech embassies world-wide. The powerful combination of international anarchist political pressure and the intense work of professional defense counsels, paid for by CZ ABC, again proved key to victory over capital injustice.

Though the case isn't over, state prosecutors have appealed to the High Court, the likelihood of the sentence being overturned by the City Court is slim. Keep in touch with CZ ABC (FSA-IWA) information to come:

FSA-IWA

PO Box 5, 15006 Praha 56, Czech Republic

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Kalenderpanden Squat Evicted in Amsterdam



NETHERLANDS -- In the early morning of October 31, riot police evicted the Kalenderpanden, a huge squatted building in the east part of Amsterdam. Even though an opinion poll done by the city council showed that 49% of Amsterdam's population was against the eviction (while 25% didn't know the building, and 25% were for the eviction) the police came with watercannons and a tear gas commando, ready for battle. They soon realized that in order to evict the Kalenderpanden they had to contend with some very serious barricades that the squatters had constructed in defense. The barricades were built in the early morning - the western part of the building was protected by opening two bridges - The eastern side was protected with three giant barricades, some of which had been ignited. Though slowed down and completely frustrated, the cops finally made it through the last barricade and evicted all the inhabitants.

According to the action group, the council

members are responsible for the planned eviction of the Kalenderpanden. Seeing as their aims revolve around the capitalist dream of money, money, and more money, it is easy to understand that the people who actually live and work in Amsterdam are forgotten when they can't pay one million guilders for a luxury apartment.

The action weekend against the evictions at the beginning of the month began with supporters of the squat paying a visit to the houses of council members and putting glue in their locks, and ended with a big demonstration on October 1st. Over 2500 people showed up at Dam square in the rain to show support for the squat and expose the politicians greed. Just about 30 cops accompanied the demonstration, while 4 busses of dirty riot cops were guarding the mayor's house. Some paintbombs and smokebombs exploded at the police headquarters, but in general it was a peaceful demonstration.

Since the beginning of the squat an active environment developed with a free radio station, bar, concert hall, art exhibition and last but not least housing for about 15 people. The last project which was started at the Entrepotdok was the Counter Information Agency.

Greek Anarchist Militants Firebomb Police Station

GREECE -- Three people on motorcycles hurled molotov cocktails at a suburban police station outside of Athens, in the early morning hours of September 4th, to protest the government's new anti-terrorism measures (including expanded cooperation with US officials). Fires set by the three fire bombs caused damage to two police vehicles, but resulted in no injuries, police reported.

The action was claimed by a group called 'Anarchist Attack'. In an anonymous call to an Athens newspaper, the group said the attack was "to welcome the new terrorist law," police said. It was also "in support of all imprisoned Anarchist fighters."

Less than a week later, on September 10th, a time bomb damaged a British car dealership in Athens, but caused no injuries. There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the explosion, and it is unclear whether the two attacks were linked.

Greece's public order minister, Mihalīs Chrisohoidis, plans to visit Washington, DC, to sign a counter-terrorism pact which would allow for greater exchange of information and expertise. The accord has touched off protests in Greece, where many people bitterly oppose any US influence.

General Strike Cripples Argentina

ARGENTINA -- On November 10th, in Salta, Argentina, the hundreds of poor and unemployed Argentines who had been blockading a highway in northwestern Argentina were met with gunfire and brutal police after a judge ordered their removal. Anibal Veron, an unemployed father of five, was shot in the face and killed, and at least six others were injured in the clashes. The protesters had been blocking the highway, located in the province of Salta, one of the nation's poorest areas, for 11 days demanding food, welfare, and placement in State employment programs. After the clash with police, the protesters made their way to the town of General Mosconi, where they briefly took five police officers hostage and set fire to the police station. This blockade was only one of many which have sprung up all over Argentina in an expression of mass discontent with the Argentinean government.

At the news of Veron's death, the Argentine Transport Workers announced they would take industrial action, and the nation's largest and most powerful union, the General Workers Confederation

(CGT), also proposed action. These actions came to a head two weeks later, on November 14th, when Argentina found itself in the midst of the third, and largest, general strike of the year. The actions were fueled on by an announcement made by President Fernando de la Rúa's comments on the 10th, that Argentina would once again cut social programs in order to be eligible for yet more "aid" loans. The planned reforms include a public spending cap, complete elimination of the public pension system, and raising the retirement age for women. Already having endured more than two years of recession and unemployment rates as high as 15.4%, the striking Argentines recognize that more austerity measures, or "aid" loans, will only serve to increase their impoverishment and strengthen the government's ability to repress them.

The striking workers set up massive roadblocks and barricades in all of Argentina's 23 provinces. The number of strikers is now estimated to be in the millions, and according to the government there have been 34 arrests stemming from the strike as of November 25th.

Political Prisoners' Hunger Strike Ends In Bloody Seige

TURKEY - At about 4:30 am on December 19th, Turkish security forces stormed 48 prisons in order to end hunger strikes of nearly 1500 political prisoners. The prisoners, most jailed for their beliefs and membership to leftist organizations, initiated the hunger

Party (MHP; members of which have been involved in the killing of many leftists since before 1980), took parliamentary representatives to visit some of the prisons before the raids commenting publicly, "Let them die."

This isn't the first mass hunger strike in

Turkish prisons. In 1984, political prisoners went on hunger strike for 72 days in the Metris Prison in Istanbul, demanding the end of torture in prison and the right to not wear prison uniforms. Four died, and subsequently conditions improved a little. In 1996 a 79-day strike took place, involving almost every political prisoner from almost every prison in the country in opposition to

TIKKO. DHKP-C (Revolutionary People's Liberation Party-Front; former Revolutionary Left) is a sort of Stalinist organization, aiming for some kind of "public revolution" headed by a party leader (from their own party, of course). It's mostly organized in squatter areas of Istanbul and in rural areas of Anatolia, generally inhabited by Alevit people, and is headed by Dursun Karatab, currently living abroad somewhere in Europe. The TKP/ML-TIKKO (Turkish Communist Party/Marxist Leninist-Turkish Labor Farmer Liberation Army), is a Maoist organization active in Dersim (Tunceli), some squatter areas, and is supported by most of the leftist legal-illegal parties.

Turkish anarchists have also played a part in the struggle against the F-system prison project from the beginning, in the summer of 2000. In Ankara, anarchists have organized and engaged in protesting, flyer-ing, and street-fighting with the police, as well as symbolically hunger-striking in support with the prisoners. The anarchists realize the ideological differences between themselves and many of the socialist and communist Marxist prisoners, but believe the actions of the state mean more political repression against its citizens and against every kind of "state enemy." Some people in Turkish prisons consider themselves anarchists, though most are former socialists in prison for their political views and affiliations with

various "illegal" groups. The anarchists in Turkish prisons have few friends and comrades, and no groups to defend or take care of them. They are exposed to repression not only at the hands of the state, but also by their fellow socialist inmates.

In response to the brutality of the Turkish state in dealing with the political prisoners, imprisoned militants, including anarchists from Italy, Spain and Greece, have undertaken hunger strikes in solidarity with the leftist prisoners in Turkey. "The states are the terrorists! Solidarity is the weapon of the people! War against the war of the bosses! As long as there is even one prisoner, nobody will be free! Freedom to all of us!" -- Anarchist in Solidarity, Greece.



Military police attempt to disperse a solidarity demonstration in Ankara

on November 13th in protest to their proposed transfer to a F-type (cell style) prison in Sincan. Most currently live in dormitory-style cell wards, which house up to 100 prisoners and are often unmanageable for prison authorities. The prisoners fear that the move to F-type cells, each holding one to three inmates, would leave them more vulnerable to abuse and torture, already common in Turkish prisons, especially among political prisoners.

In response to the raids prisoners took up resistance, in some cases armed, according to Justice Minister Hikmet Sami Turk, some inmates managed to lay their hands on semi-automatic weapons and fight back, killing two soldiers, one in Umraniye prison and another in Canakkale, and wounding three others. In the end, various sources put inmate death tolls between 17 and 30 and at least 57 others were seriously injured. "The government cannot control the large wards, some of which house up to 100 prisoners and are decorated with rebel flags," said Turk. "The raid enabled security forces to enter areas of Bayrampasa prison which had been held by left-wingers since 1991."

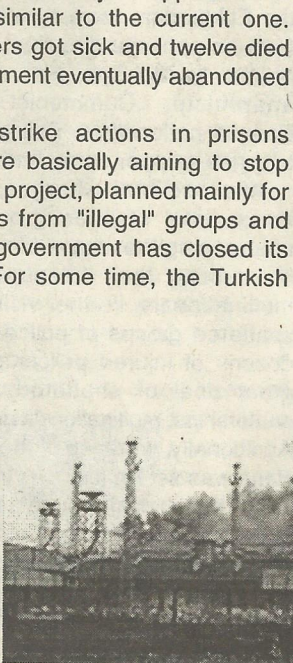
Some 200 of the strikers engaged in death-fasts, ingesting water but no sugar, without which a person will very quickly die, and many were reportedly close to death at the time of the raids. The newly assigned chair of the Human Rights Commission of the Turkish Parliament, Mehmet Arslan, a member of the fascist Nationalist Action

Party (MHP; members of which have been involved in the killing of many leftists since before 1980), took parliamentary representatives to visit some of the prisons before the raids commenting publicly, "Let them die."

This isn't the first mass hunger strike in Turkish prisons. In 1984, political prisoners went on hunger strike for 72 days in the Metris Prison in Istanbul, demanding the end of torture in prison and the right to not wear prison uniforms. Four died, and subsequently conditions improved a little. In 1996 a 79-day strike took place, involving almost every political prisoner from almost every prison in the country in opposition to

a transfer plan similar to the current one. Most of the strikers got sick and twelve died before the government eventually abandoned the plan. The hunger strike actions in prisons across Turkey are basically aiming to stop the F-type prison project, planned mainly for socialist prisoners from "illegal" groups and parties, but the government has closed its eyes and ears. For some time, the Turkish state has been determined to break down the level of resistance in its prisons. They have tried everything, and are now pushing for the pacification of the individual in prison by way of atomization, the elimination of social relationships for the prisoner using a U.S.-made and developed system of isolation and torture called the "F-system." The system is modeled after U.S. maximum-security, behavior-modification prisons that impose high-tech total isolation in order to destroy prisoners' morale and control them politically.

The hunger strike and death-fasting opposition to the F-system have been led mostly by the DHKP-C and the TKP/ML-



Smoke rises from Istanbul's Bayrampasa prison during a police raid to force an end to hunger strikes.

Fortress Europe Beseiged in Nice

FRANCE -- Thousands of activists, ranging from unionists, to pacifists, to anarchists, to Basque nationalists, filled the streets of Nice on December 6-7th to oppose the summit of European Union leaders and demonstrate in favor of a different future for Europe and the world.

As an international anarchist statement endorsed by eighteen different groups before the European summit protests stated, "We anarchist activists from Europe and all over the world struggle daily for a society that is completely different to the one enjoyed by the European Union or the other capitalist institutions... We want a society based on equality, a classless society without sexism and racism, in which everyone contributes to the overall wealth according to their abilities and from which everyone receives according to their needs... We want a world where freedom, justice and dignity are a reality."

On Thursday, over 70,000 people, primarily trade unionists, demonstrated against the so-called "European Charter of Rights," which they deem to be an insufficient guarantor of basic rights. Among the demonstrators was a 10,000 strong block of revolutionaries, including delegations from the French CNT, the Spanish CGT, the German FAU, and other groups.

On Thursday night, 2,000 Italians, who had paid their train tickets and had all the necessary paperwork to cross a border that theoretically the Schengen accords have eliminated, were blocked by hundreds of Italian riot police at Vintimiglia. Negotiations between border authorities and the delegation of primarily Tutti Bianche ensued for over a day and a half, during which those blocked at the border had to sleep in the trains. Eventually it was decided to march to the French consulate. Once arriving they were greeted yet again with legions of riot police as well as clubs and tear gas. Fortunately the Tutti Bianche were well armed and able to resist. Eight people and five policemen were injured in the clashes.

After the large union march in Nice a radical group of about 3,000 broke off from the demonstration and headed to the train station to show solidarity with the Italian comrades, resulting in battles with police at the station. In addition, a group of twenty Spaniards who managed to sneak past the border in solidarity with the blocked Italians and was not allowed back into France. Only after lengthy negotiations were they allowed to travel, under police escort, to Marseilles.

Once again, the freedom to circulate in Europe shows itself to be a farce.

Meanwhile, early Friday morning, approximately 5,000 revolutionaries battled French riot police in Nice. This number would have been much larger, but the Free Train Initiative was prevented by French riot police. Hundreds of demonstrators in Bordeaux, Paris, and Nantes, as well as other cities, who had been told that the train stations would be free of ticket controllers, were met by hundreds of riot policemen blocking access to the trains. Several people were arrested and several were injured in the clashes between demonstrators and police that took place in cities across France.

Those who did make it however were mainly from the reformist ATTAC, Basque radicals, left-parliamentary organizations, anarchists, and various Marxist groups. The plan for blocking the summit Friday morning involved organizing two separate blocks to converge on the "Acropolis" fortress where the EU leaders were meeting, each coming from an opposite direction. A charge on the police barricades was carried out by anarchists, Communist militants and Basque nationalists. Police responded with tear gas, pepper spray and arrests.

After several charges, demonstrators broke into smaller groups, essentially abandoning the idea of blocking the summit, but turning their attention to banks and multinationals in the vicinity, as well as scattered groups of police. This resulted in dozens of injured policemen, as well as a great deal of shattered windows of car dealerships, multinationals and temp agencies. Additionally, a branch of the National Bank of Paris was set on fire.

By the mid afternoon things had settled down once again as most of the demonstrators regrouped, and a solidarity demo set out for the police station, only to be met with tear gas grenades before arrival.

Following the demo the police surrounded the main convergence space, trapping about 3,000 people inside and dispersing another 500 who were outside with the help of a water cannon. This was essentially the last major confrontation of the summit.

Unfortunately the Nice mobilization was not as successful as had been hoped. First, and possibly most important, is the state repression that went into effect prior to the demonstrations, starting with the repression of the free train initiatives and the blocking of the 2,000 Italian demonstrators at the

French border. This probably cost the blockading effort at least 3,000 people, if not more, and that is no small number.

Secondly, the fact that the mainstream unions chose to fill the streets and then leave the night before the beginning of the summit. While nobody expected them to participate in the blockade, it would be fair to assume that had they still been there a lot of rank and file militants would have participated and helped to swell the ranks of the blockade.



European Union flag burned during Nice protests

Finally, from what people who were in Nice are commenting, it is becoming fairly evident that the organizational aspect of the mobilization was somewhat lacking. Only one meeting place, no secondary rallying points in case of dispersal, conflicts between organizations and strategies, and the likes.

However, it would not be fair to say that the mobilizations were a failure, by any means. It was a great example of revolutionaries putting aside their differences and acting together for a common cause, and the sight of anarchists, Basque radicals, and Marxists together on the battlefield is one those who where there will not soon forget. In addition, thousands of dollars of damage were inflicted on capitalists, and the world's leaders, in this case Europe, were once again shown that everywhere they go they will need an army of policemen to protect them. And when we talk of creating an atmosphere ideal for class war and making the enemies of the people feel unsafe, rest assured that, apart from the every day acts of class warfare, events like Nice and Prague are what we are referring to.

Radical Protesters Clash with Fascists and Riot Against Capitalism

ITALY -- On November 11th, as leading capitalists and politicians were gathering for the meeting of the Trilateral Commission in Milan, revolutionaries and radicals from a number of the city's Social Centers were proclaiming once again, 'No Business as Usual'. A planned demonstration against capitalism and fascism had brought 2,000 to 3,000 protesters into the streets.

A couple of hundred neo-nazis from across northern Italy were also in the city trying to protest against what they call 'Jewish Globalization'. After hearing of a fascist attack against a group of high school students near the 'De Sade' club where the fascists were gathering, the

protestors decided to pay the rats a visit. But the police had different ideas and as the demonstration started to move, the cops surrounded them. Completely outwitting the police however, the activists took to the subway and managed to get even closer to the fascists, leaving the cops to push through and around their own barricades and self-created traffic jams.

For a moment it really looked as though the comrades would reach the nazis and remind them that Milan never leaves out the welcome mat for fascists; but alas, the police lines guarding the club resisted long enough to allow the other cops to reach the area. Then the real riot broke

out, and it was a mess! 17 comrades were arrested and 20 people were wounded. The cops completely destroyed an entire city block with wild attacks and hundreds of tear gas grenades.

However, despite the violent police reaction, the comrades resisted for over 3 hours forcing the nazi rats of Forza Nuova to stay inside the discoteque having to rely on police protection. And, since the hotel hosting the Commission meeting was quite near, the police were forced to lock the delegate-criminals inside as well, until the situation cooled off. It was a glorious day against fascism and capitalism, which saw Social Centers across Milan united in struggle!

Defend the 'Chattanooga 3'!

TENNESSEE - On Thursday, January 11th, the Chattanooga 3 were convicted by a jury of disrupting a May 19th, 1998 city council meeting. Lorenzo Komboa Ervin, Damon McGee and Mikail Musa Muhammad helped organized a protest at City Hall, attended by over 150 people, during a city council meeting to bring attention to the police killings of two black men, Montrail Collins, April 28; and Kevin McCollugh, May 6. Collins and McCollugh were two of 40 people killed by the Chattanooga police since 1980, most of whom were black. The protest coincided with a regularly scheduled city council meeting, at which Ervin, an organizer for Black Autonomy Copwatch and former member of the Black Panther Party, had been promised an opportunity to speak. When his allotted time came, however, the council ignored him. In response, Ervin seized the microphone and began to read a statement denouncing the brutality of the Chattanooga PD, at which point police rushed and arrested him, beating him in the process. McGee and Muhammad attempted to defend Ervin from the police and were subsequently beaten and arrested themselves.

The state's disruption law makes it a misdemeanor offense to intentionally make a physical action or verbal utterance that interrupts a meeting. Defense attorneys William Dobsen, Mike Little and John Cavett maintained that members of the Coalition Against Police Brutality, to which their clients belonged, were told that Ervin would be allowed to make a special presentation on a

police review board near the start of the meeting. A video tape of the meeting was the focus of the case argued by prosecutors Dean Ferraro and Mary Moore. After less than an hour of deliberation, the jury found the three guilty of disrupting the meeting as well as Muhammad guilty of resisting arrest.

According to Ervin, the three did not receive a fair trial because the jury (of which seven were white, and three black) was prejudiced against them by an incident occurring the previous Wednesday outside the courtroom. Apparently someone brought several rounds of ammunition into the Hamilton County courts building, which he allegedly showed to a police officer. Afterward, Judge Rebecca J. Stern ordered the room cleared and from then on issued that courtroom observers must pass through a metal detector before entering the courtroom, giving the trial a heightened sense of criminality. The event was reported on television and in the city's daily newspaper, which several jurors admitted seeing or discussing. Stern, however, denied the defense motion for a mistrial, though she did excuse the jurors who saw or discussed the reports, leaving only 10 jurors, instead of 12, to decide the case. In addition, Judge Stern displayed her biases openly in court, denouncing Ervin as a "red anarchist," "terrorist" and a "racist in reverse" (in reference to his outspoken position against the Klan and all white supremacists). Stern is the same judge who alleged a conspiracy by the Black Autonomy International, Anarchist



Lorenzo Komboa Ervin

Black Cross, and other radical groups to terrorize the city of Chattanooga through bombings and "violent" anti-police brutality and KKK protests; she also claimed that Ervin's European speaking tour, just prior to his arrest, had been financed by international terrorists.

Appearing with McGee and Muhammad at a press conference after the trial, Ervin said he was not surprised by the guilty verdicts, "From the beginning, this case was a malicious prosecution. We're not intimidated by these verdicts. We will continue to speak out against racism and police brutality. We'll fight as long as it takes." The three could receive at least six months in state prisons. Sentencing has been set for February 26th, though they intend to appeal their convictions.

For more information, check the Lorenzo Komboa Ervin / 'Chattanooga 3' Solidarity website: <http://sf.indymedia.org/lke.php3>

'Francs Tireurs Partisans' Court Trial Postponed

FRANCE - On October 15, 1999, two militant anti-fascists from Marseilles, Yves (40 and William (38), were arrested and charged with several attacks from the past few years. The two are accused of being members of the militant anti-fascist group 'Francs Tireurs Partisans' (FTP) which has been waging an autonomous struggle since 1991 against the 'Front National' (FN) and its members. From 1991 to 1998, the FTP carried out 10 bomb and arson attacks on FN offices and other symbols of the neo-fascist movement. Even police statements admit that the bombings were carried out in such a way as not to kill people, rather only to damage property.

The FTP have consistently identified with a radical form of anti-fascism, marked by an internationalist and anti-capitalist viewpoint. Although they reject the moralistic and politically institutionalized anti-fascism of groups such as "SOS Racism", they have not suggested that others should follow their lead. Instead, they view their struggle as one form among many, no more or less efficient or legitimate than other forms of anti-fascist struggle. Also, they see themselves as limited to a

specific, geographical context, namely the region of Provence Alpes Cote D'Azur (PACA). This area is unique in France. Once a long-time bastion of the left, from centrist groups to the far-left, a political shift began about 30 years ago. Mafia influence over politics increased, and open alliances formed between police and fascist forces. Four communities became dominated by the FN. The tragic highpoint of this development was the murder of Ibrahim Ali by FN activists in 1995.

Today, radical anti-fascism is more essential than ever before, not because any real danger exists that the FN and its cohorts could come into power, but rather because its ideas and viewpoints are being

implemented by the ruling parties out of fear of losing votes to the FN and its allies. At the same time they hide behind the veneer of "state anti-fascism" and point their fingers at the FN. In reality, however, the ruling parties are fulfilling the political demands of the FN at the same time.

The trial against Yves and William was initially set to begin on December 19, 2000, but was subsequently delayed until February

6-7, 2001. Solidarity efforts are underway. Financial contributions to help offset legal costs would be appreciated. Also, comrades are planning a nationwide demo in Marseilles, with a press conference and solidarity concert to follow in the evening.

For the latest information on the situation, please contact **Anarchist Black Cross (ABC)** Innsbruck, LOM, Postlagernd 6024, Innsbruck, Austria; e-mail: abcibk@hotmail.com, or see the following web sites: www.samizdat.net/solidarite/html/kit.html www.altern.org/solidariteftp

**LIBERTÉ POUR
LES PRISONNIERS
ANTIFASCISTES**



Anarchist Militants Sentenced in Poland

POLAND -- Adam Mucha, an anarchist militant from Krakow, who was arrested after fighting broke out during a 'Bash The Rich' demonstration, was recently convicted by the Polish courts. He has been sentenced to 1 to 5 years probation and a fine. This, however, is good news for the anarchist movement, as Adam could have received up to ten years in prison.

The outlook for another Polish anarchist, Tomasz Wilkoszewski, is not so hopeful. Tomasz, sentenced to 15 years for the killing of a Nazi skinhead, recently had his appeal rejected by the Polish high court, and remains in prison. The last hope for his release now lays with the president of Poland, and many actions are being planned to pressure for Tomasz's release.

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Revolutionary Afghan Women's Protest Turns Violent

PAKISTAN -- Pakistani police fired tear gas and beat protesters with steel-tipped sticks during a demonstration against Afghanistan's hardline Taliban rulers and their policies on women. Hundreds of supporters of the Revolutionary Afghan Women's Association staged a rally on December 10, on the outskirts of Islamabad to protest human rights abuses and discrimination against women by the Taliban. Some of the protesters, many of them women, threw stones at a Pakistani religious group when they started shouting slogans in favor of the Taliban, witnesses said. The religious group was collecting money for Islamic militants in the disputed Kashmir region of India, where Muslims are fighting to become part of Islamic Pakistan. "Afghans destroyed our stall and threw away the religious books," said Mohammed Mustafa, a supporter of the militant Jaish-e-Mohammed group.

Stone-throwing clashes broke out between supporters of the Afghan women

and several people in the neighborhood. Several of the women were arrested as black smoke from burning tires and eye-burning tear gas polluted the air. According to the Taliban's interpretation of Islam, women are segregated from men and denied free access to work and education. They must wear the all-encompassing burqa and are not allowed to travel without a male member of their family. The Taliban rule more than 95 percent of Afghanistan, including the capital, Kabul, and are fighting their northern-based opposition on several fronts in an attempt to extend their rule over the entire country.

The opposition is made up of mostly ethnic and religious minorities. Some within the alliance share the Taliban's harsh brand of Islam. The Revolutionary Afghan Women's Association also protests the opposition, which they say has been party to the destruction of their homeland and the oppression of women.

Ladronka Squat Evicted Following IMF-World Bank Protests

CZECH REPUBLIC -- In the morning of November 9th, the squatted cultural center and living space Ladronka in Prague was evicted, completely suprising the inhabitants. The doors to the Ladronka squat were kicked in by the police, most of whom weren't wearing badge numbers. A legal observer approached them on the matter, making sure they knew that it was illegal, but this information was ignored. Four people arrested during the eviction have all since been released. All of the squatters' belongings were confiscated and only some of it has been returned. After the eviction one of the supporters of Ladronka got heavily beaten up by the police, he is still in hospital.

The eviction is in drastic contradiction to the legal status of Ladronka. Since 1994 there has been an agreement between the City and Ladronka, which legally assures the possibility of construction and repair as well as use of the center. In 1999 the city tried to unilaterally break the agreement even while the juridical proceedings are still currently under way! As official grounds for the eviction the city is charging the inhabitants with 'using unregistered electricity and telephone'. However, it is strongly believed that this eviction comes in the wake of the recent protests in Prague during the IMF and World Bank annual meetings. With the police's renewed legitimacy in

the eyes of the public, they appear to be attempting to repress activism in the Czech Republic. The mayor of Praha 6 has also launched a campaign against Ladronka because it housed many IMF/WB protesters. A petition was started against Ladronka during the squats unusually crowded period around the time of the protests. The petition was signed by 100 people.

However, a counter petition was started in support of the squat and received three times as many signatures in Praha 6 alone and 2,500 other signatures from across Prague.

The value of Ladronka to the squatting community and the locals of Prague is unimaginable. "Ladronka is the longest lasting squat in Prague. It's been established for seven years, and has hosted many cultural activities and concerts." says Hubert, a supporter. The local politician which is the main person responsible for the eviction is Martin Dvorák, candidate for the senate-elections

in the Czech Republic. The illegal eviction of Ladronka must be undone! To this purpose there has been various demonstrations. On November 12, a protest of over 400 participants took place in Prague's old city center. The now homeless inhabitants of Ladronka brought tents to spend the night in the city center and thus make people aware of their situation.

Squatted since 1993, Ladronka served as living space for 15 people and has continually provided space for anarchist and radical political activities and for non-commercial alternative culture. Over the years, the Ladronka squatters have hosted a number of concerts, plays, performances, exhibitions, films, discussions, and other cultural actions, including children's day and an open house. Being one of the few spaces in Prague where it is possible to organize support actions and benefits for many activist groups, Ladronka has provided an important role in helping to strengthen relationships between different radical cultures.



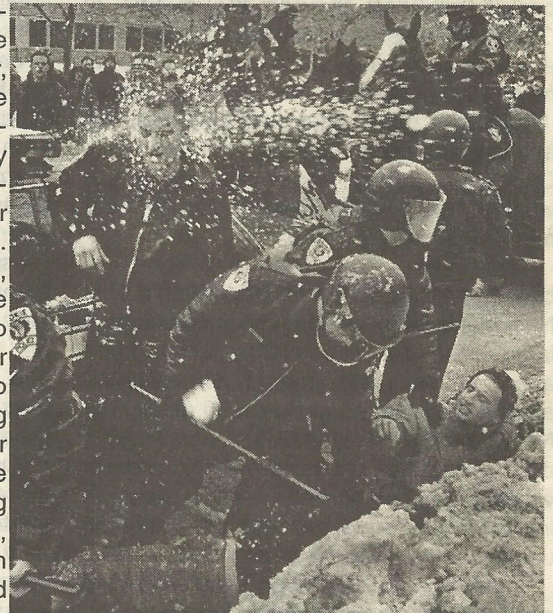
Klan Rally Rocked by Riotous Anti-Racist Protests

ILLINOIS -- On December 16th, over 600 anti-racist demonstrators clashed with police and pelted white-hooded Klansmen with snowballs and rocks during a planned march by the Ku Klux Klan in Skokie, a Chicago suburb that is home to many Holocaust survivors. Police arrested about 20 protesters, some of who were said to have smashed the windows of at least three squad cars, others for disorderly conduct and rioting.

When the Klan first arrived on the front steps, one group of chanting protestors alerted the more militant people of their presence. Black-clad anarchists and other activists made their way to the front, and conflict at a makeshift police line began. Police used attack dogs, batons, riot shields and horses to secure the Klan's rally. Protesters counter-attacked the police with a constant barrage of snowballs (and horse manure at one point), and two squad cars had their windows

smashed in. All of this was on the outside of the protest pen, an area where protestors had to be searched to enter, but were allowed closer access to the Klan. Inside the protest pen, after pelting Klansmen with snowballs for nearly an hour, protesters rushed the demonstration, forcing the planned three hour rally to end after only forty-five minutes.

Twenty-one people were arrested, with twenty being anti-racists and the odd one out being a nazi skinhead who hid in the courthouse for an hour after being legally released, too afraid to walk out past the anti-racists waiting outside for others to be released. After everyone was released, the police indiscriminately attacked the remaining protesters outside of the courthouse, touching off another street battle with dozens of anti-racists, which lasted over two hours.



Let's hope there was a rock in that snowball.

Police Attacked by Indigenous Community

GUATEMALA - The release of two policemen ended a confrontation with local residents who besieged a police station, threatened to kill the officers and burned government property. Residents of this largely indigenous community said that police insensitivity toward Mayan Indians motivated the confrontation, in which a mob ignited a huge bonfire, burning motorcycles, typewriters and chairs looted from the station.

The violence broke out on September 26, in Fray Bartolome de las Casas, 95 miles (150 kms) northwest of Guatemala City, after a police truck crashed into a roadside stand, leaving a 23-year-old woman with serious leg injuries. Police indifference to the accident enraged the townspeople. About 500 villagers held two police chiefs hostage for nearly 24 hours until their emotional release was negotiated late in the evening.

Locals, many of whom speak only traditional Mayan languages, accuse authorities here of racism and said Friday's abductions constituted a protest without unnecessary violence.

New Anarchist People of Color Caucus

UNITED STATES -- A new People of Color Caucus, affiliated with the Anarchist Black Cross Federation, is in the midst of forming and welcomes the input and participation of anarchist people of color everywhere.

Tentatively, the objectives of the People of Color Caucus are:

- To give a place for people of color in the anarchist movement and revolutionaries of color generally to strategize, network and organize solutions relating to their history, experiences and communities.
- To strive for and build principled unity among all our comrades in the struggle for freedom, autonomy, self-determination and revolution.
- To address the issues faced by people of color, such as criminalization, incarceration, colonialism, white supremacy and the counterinsurgency we face and relate such with the struggle for freedom for Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War.
- To give support of and solidarity to the thousands of people of color, including prison organizers and "politicized" prisoners, who are captives of a system built on centuries of oppression.

Membership to the People of Color Caucus is open, but we ask for everyone to respect the importance of people of color organizing revolutionary solutions from their own perspectives and with solutions relating to their respective communities. Unquestionably, people of color have struggled with 500 years of exploitation, and hence our experiences relating to oppression are qualitatively different. We encourage people of European descent to form study groups and discuss ways to confront white supremacy and skin privilege.

ABCF member groups receive complimentary copies of the Caucus' publication "Break It Down," while others are provided subscriptions on a sliding scale, based on need. We ask all who can afford it to at least contribute stamps to the effort.

For info on the forming Caucus, please contact:

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Rising Neo-Nazi Tide in Germany Greeted by Widespread Anti-Fascist Resistance

GERMANY - On December 9, nearly 25,000 people marched through the streets of Cologne, protesting a rally held by right-wing extremists. During the march, groups of militant anti-fascists managed to break through the police lines and hurled stones and glass bottles at neo-Nazi demonstration. One police officer was reportedly injured when hit by a rock, and 30 people were briefly detained by police.

On Saturday, December 16, hundreds of counter-demonstrators rallied against a neo-Nazi march in Dortmund, accompanied by a large police presence to keep the two sides apart. About 1,500 people demonstrated against the march that drew 200 or so neo-Nazis to the western industrial city. The city deployed 2,000 officers in order to prevent violence, and in the end, the only reported incident was a failed attempt by leftist demonstrators to break through police lines.

In addition to the Cologne and Dortmund mobilizations, recent months have seen an increase in anti-fascist activity all around

Germany. In October, in the western town of Goeppingen, a leader of the NPD was shot and seriously wounded in what is believed to be a politically motivated attempt on his life. Siegfried Weiss-Stuessgen, a deputy chairman of the local NPD branch, was shot three times during an early morning attack. Weiss-Stuessgen told officials before he underwent surgery that a masked man had fired several shots at him. Hospital officials said after the operation that Weiss-Stuessgen's life was not in danger.

On November 25th, German riot police turned water cannons on anti-fascist demonstrators after violence erupted at a Berlin rally called by the far-right National Democratic Party to protest government plans to ban it. Police canceled the final two-hour segment of the scheduled five-hour

protest after thousands of counter-demonstrators blocked the route of over a thousand far-right demonstrators, and pelted them with rocks and firecrackers.

Protected by some 4,000 heavily equipped riot police and jeered by hundreds of anti-fascists chanting "Nazis out," the NPD members had marched over a mile to the rally site where they criticized government plans to ban them. The rally was the NDP's fifth this past year in Berlin.

Anti-fascist protest continued this year, most recently in Cottbus, where about 10,000 demonstrated on January 7th in the east German border town after a series of racist and anti-Semitic incidents. State premier Manfred Stolpe commented about the protests, "This protest shows that people refuse to be cowed by 60 or 70 Nazi thugs."



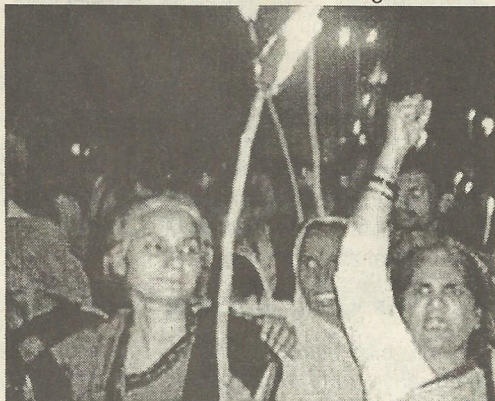
Dam Protesters Battle Police in New Delhi

INDIA -- On November 13, over a thousand environmental protesters stormed police barricades in New Delhi, and marched up to the offices of the World Bank, demanding they be allowed to meet with visiting Bank president James Wolfensohn. The march was organized by the anti-dam group Narmada Bachao Andolan (Save the Narmada Movement), which has been protesting the Indian Supreme Court decision allowing the Sardar Sarovar dam across the Narmada River to be raised. The organization campaigns for the rights of the approximately 400,000 people likely to be displaced by the dam project. The group has blasted the World Bank for Wolfensohn's recent remarks favoring the dam.

Walking nearly six miles to the World Bank's offices, protesters shouted slogans against the global project lender and demanded that it "quit India." The march met with stiff resistance from the New Delhi police, who set up double barricades in the area. Leading the protesters, Narmada Bachao Andolan women battled with police-women at the barricades, in some case nearly breaking through.

India is the world's third largest builder of dams. Sardar Sarovar is the most massive of 30 large dams planned along India's Narmada River. Construction of the dam - the biggest development scheme in India's

history - has been the subject of intense controversy for more than a decade. In February 1999, India's supreme court lifted a four-year stay on construction of Sardar Sarovar. Since then, the dam's wall has grown from



Activists demonstrate in Bhopal against the Sardar Sarovar Project

80.3 meters to 88 meters and now to 90 meters. Eventually, the Sardar Sarovar is expected to be 130 meters high. Opponents say the dam is not essential to the security of India's food supply and that it will directly displace more than 320,000 people. Conservation groups expect millions more to be affected from displacements by the canal system and other projects. Environmental Defense calls Sardar Sarovar "India's greatest planned environmental disaster."

Zapatistas Force Closure of Second Military Base

MEXICO -- On Sunday, December 31st, Mexican President Vicente Fox ordered the closure of a second military base outside an Indian community Chiapas, only hours after villagers marched onto the base and demanded the troops leave. The mainstream press gave credit to Fox for the gesture of peace, but it was in fact the Zapatistas who took the initiative. Upon entering the base earlier that day, Indigenous peoples of the Chiapas highlands, most Tzotzil Indians, cut the electric power to the base and toppled two parabolic antennas, cutting off its communications. Only after this act of daring citizen occupation did Fox order this withdrawal, which has been long demanded by Zapatistas as a condition for resuming peace talks. It was from this military base at Jolnachoj, near the Zapatista base community of Oventik, in 1995 and 1996, that the Mexican military occupied the highlands using the pretext of marijuana eradication against the drug and

alcohol-free indigenous communities.

Pressure on the state to issue more closures continued January 5th, when two US citizen and a Canadian began a hunger strike in Chiapas, demanding an end to the military occupation of a village that Zapatista rebels once used as headquarters. The three activists began their three-day fast in front of a military installation in Guadalupe Tepeyac, 110 miles east of San Cristobal de las Casas. Guadalupe Tepeyac was the rebels' headquarters until 1995, when the army drove out the Zapatistas along with 1,000 residents.

President Vicente Fox, who took office December 1 promising to restart peace talks, has withdrawn troops from two bases, released 17 guerrilla prisoners and sent an Indian rights bill to Congress in an effort to lure the rebels to the negotiating table. Although the rebels have praised Fox's efforts, they have warned that he must close all bases located near rebel strongholds.

Anarchists Accused of Bombing Campaign

SPAIN -- Eduardo García Macías and Estefanía Maurete Díaz were arrested on November 9th, accused of sending 7 letter bombs to different fascist newspapers, and charged with terrorism and belonging to an armed group. The bombs were sent by a group called 'Los Anarquistas' between April and July. Eduardo was arrested in his apartment, while Estefanía was arrested in the shopping center where she works. Also on the same day, several houses were searched by the police without justification.

As longtime social justice activists, the only "crime" committed by Eduardo and Estefanía has been to show solidarity with prisoners (together with other groups such as the Anarchist Black Cross, Amnesty International and the Association Against the Torture), and highlighting the violations of human rights in penitentiary centers and reporting the precarious situation of prisoners. No one in the media has respected the arrestees' possibility of innocence, immediately linking them with armed groups despite any substantial evidence.

Demonstrations and actions have been organized in support of Eduardo and Estefanía. In Jerez, less than a week after the arrests, the PSOE office door was sabotaged and the front of the building was graffitied with solidarity messages for the anarchist comrades. Graffiti was also found on a nearby statue, and in the stalls of the bookfair that are located across the street from the trade union building.

Turkish Anarchists Acquitted by Military Court

TURKEY -- On December 5th, three Turkish anarchists were acquitted by a military court in Ankara of 'alienating people from military service,' a crime under article 155 of the military code. They had published a declaration in May 1999 supporting conscientious objector Osman Murat Ulke while he was in prison, and were subsequently charged.

International, as well as Turkish observers hailed the acquittal as a small victory against the power of military courts, particularly as it came after the defendants had refused to make a formal defense.

Revolutionary Anarchism and the Anti-Globalization Movement

by Lucien van der Walt (Bikisha Media Collective)

Seattle And All That

Riot police battling youth. Armed forces locking down a major American city. Tens of thousands under anti-capitalist banners. Western youth and workers physically battling the WTO and imperialism. These potent images of the "battle of Seattle," November 30, 1999, were seared into the minds of militants the world over, inspiring millions upon millions fighting against the class war from above that some call "globalization." Followed by further mass protests in Washington and Davos, and two massive international coordinated actions on May 1, 2000 and September 26, 2000, Seattle marked, by any measure, an important turning point for the global working class and peasantry.



World Trade Organization protests; Seattle, Washington, November 30, 1999

"The Idea That Refuses To Die"

And anarchists were in the thick of these protests and solidarity actions, whether in Rio, Johannesburg, Prague, Istanbul, New York or Dublin, demonstrating an impressive organizational ability, growing credibility, and rising popular appeal.

In the bourgeois media, anarchists have assumed a prominence unknown since the 1960s, amazingly receiving even more credit than was our due for our role in the new "anti-globalization" movement. Anarchism

was, the New York Times exclaimed, "the idea that refuses to die." The authoritarian left, shocked at being so outflanked and outmaneuvered by the anarchists, suddenly found it necessary to write vicious, and often grossly dishonest, polemics against anarchism.

It is ironic, then, that the anarchist movement remains wracked with disagreement about how it should orientate itself towards the "anti-globalization" movement.

Orientating To The Movement

While the Platformist tradition of anarchism, and many anarcho-syndicalists have strongly identified with the new movement, many other comrades seem reluctant to become more involved in the new movement. Some

are rightly concerned about the presence of reformist and middle-class elements such as NGOs in the movement; others point to the unexpected support of far right groups such as fascists and Islamic fundamentalists for "anti-globalization"; for others, there are suspicions about the role of right-wing trade union leaders in the movement.

These concerns are valid. But they should not be used as reasons not to be involved in the "anti-globalization" movement. The new movement represents an important development for the international working class and a

massive opportunity for the anarchist movement at dawn of the twenty-first century. Seizing the moment, being involved, shaping the movement... this is the best opportunity available today to implanting anarchism within the working class and clawing our way back to our rightful place as a movement of millions, a movement that can help dig capitalism's grave.

Anti-Capitalist, Not Just "Anti-Globalization"

When we enter the "ant-globalization" movement, though, we must enter as conscious anti-capitalists. "Anti-globalization" is a vague term that opens the resistance to capitalism to all sorts of pitfalls.

Many aspects of globalization - if by this we mean the creation of an increasingly integrated world economic, political and social system- should be welcomed by anarchists. The breaking down of closed national cultures, greater international contact, a consciousness of being "citizens of the world," concern for developments halfway around the world... all are positive developments.

We should not line up with those who, under the banner of "sovereignty" and "nationality" call for the enforcement of national culture, national foods, closing of the borders to "foreign" influences and so forth. This outlook - even if dressed up in "anti-imperialist" clothing - is xenophobic and directly implies support for local nation-states.

We must support the possibilities for the development of a cosmopolitan international culture, the globalization of labor and the labor movement that are emerging with globalization. We must totally oppose the religious fundamentalists, nationalists and fascists whose problem with globalization is that it opens people to new ideas that challenge backward prejudices and cultural practices. Culture is not static. It is changed and reshaped through struggle, and we anarchists should only defend those elements of national cultures that are progressive and pro-working class.

What anarchists oppose are the neo-liberal, capitalist, aspects of globalization. We oppose attacks on wages, working conditions and welfare, because these hurt the working class and because they are in the interests of capitalists.

These capitalist aspects of globalization are an international class war rooted in capitalism, and its current crisis of profitability. Notwithstanding the hype about the "new

economy" and the "new prosperity," capitalism has been in crisis since around 1973. Average growth rates in the West in the 1950s were around 5% per year; by the 1970s, they fell to 2%; by the 1980s, the figure was closer to 1%.

And so, big business has been trying to



World Economic Forum protests; Davos, Switzerland, January 29, 2000

restructure itself for survival and renewed profit through the implementation of neo-liberalism: casualization, privatization, subcontracting, welfare cutbacks, regressive tax reform, and the deregulation of trade and money movements. All of these policies are in the interest of the dominant sections of the capitalist class- the giant transnational corporations.

Outside And Against The State

The capitalist nation state is not the victim of capitalist globalization, as some suggest - usually from a nationalist, state-capitalist, or reformist perspective- when they argue that the development of large companies and large multi-lateral institutions like the IMF and WTO leads to a loss of "sovereignty" by a supposedly innocent nation state, which is then "forced" to adapt to the "new reality" of "globalization."

These sorts of argument have some serious political implications. They divert attention away from the role of the nation state in driving neo-liberal restructuring. They also tends to suggest that the nation state - "our" nation state - is an innocent victim that "we" must ally with and defend against a "foreign" globalization.

On the contrary, anarchists recognise that the nation state is one of the main authors of globalization, and, in particular, the capitalist aspects of globalization.

The IMF, World Bank, and WTO are organizations made up of member nation states, as is the United Nations. It is the nation state that has implemented neo-liberal attacks on the working class the world over. It is the nation state that has allowed

giant corporations to operate globally, by dismantling the closed national economies of the 1945-1973 period, which were characterised by the thinking that "what's good for Ford is good for America."

It is neo-liberal restructuring, implemented and enforced by the nation state, which has made it possible for international labor markets, international capital movements, and international production chains to emerge on the scale that has taken place (I include many Third World nation states here, including "my" own, South Africa: witness the fact that the South African capitalist class government is reducing tariffs faster than the WTO requires. When the WTO asked South Africa to open up its textile industry over 12 years, our rulers volunteered to do the job in just eight! So capitalist globaliza-

tion is not something simply imposed on "us" by the global system, imperialism, etc., although these play a role).

The nation state is part of the problem. One is as bad as another in this respect.

Therefore anarchists do not agree with people like Ralph Nader who argued, roughly, "Vote me, so I can save our democracy from the big companies," because anarchists know that the role of the State is to serve those companies: this is what the State does! This is where we part ways with those who think the state is an ally of labor and the poor in the fight against capitalist globalization.

As such, anarchists cannot agree with idea of a right/ left anti-globalization coalition,



Revolutionary Anti-Capitalist Bloc, IMF/World Bank protests; Washington DC, April 16, 2000

or the liberal myth that we have now moved "beyond left and right." (Witness the Seattle protests: the liberals gave semi-fascist Pat Buchanan a platform, but whined when the anarchists attacked Niketown).

Against National Protectionism

We fight outside and against the State, trying to organize internationally. True, cheap imported goods do threaten jobs "at home." But the solution is not to call on the state to ban these goods: it is to organize workers in all the sweatshops around the world. We fight for international labor unity, an international minimum wage, international labor standards, and never national protectionism and trade bans.

Anarchists want self-managed, class-confrontational struggle, rather than "engaging" the system. Anarchists want to build self-managed forms of struggle and action, rather than placing our faith in technocracy, elections, or "our" governments. In this picture, the use of violence is a tactical question, not a principle: lock down or burn down are choices to be made according to the situation. This is precisely what the liberals and pacifists refuse to see.

Into The Anti-Globalization Movement

We must enter the new anti-globalization movement. True, it is full of reformists and middle class elements. But this is precisely why we must be involved! To stand back is to surrender the new movement, with its immense revolutionary potential, to the reformists and middle class. It is to abdicate our revolutionary duty to merge revolutionary anarchism with the struggles of the working class, to prevent the revolt of the slaves being used to hoist another elite into power.

It is not a question of whether we should be involved. It is an issue of how.

The aims of anarchist involvement are surely:

1) To promote the self-management of struggle: at every point, anarchists must fight for organizational forms, protest forms, and decision-making forms that rest upon the active involvement of the working class and provide an opportunity for the class to self-manage the struggle, win confidence, and fight from below.

This means:

- Occupations, rather than elite sabotage
- Marches and protests and riots, rather than policy advocacy
- Action committees operating through mandates and accountability through assemblies and summits, rather than the delegation of all responsibility to a small coterie of leaders
- Decentralised coalitions which allow the maximum initiative from below
- Building the capacity of organizations through promoting horizontal linkages between groups, and by ensuring the

salaries by 80%. This will expose the unfair nature of the system, the class wage gap, and the refusal of bosses to really consider alternatives - because they sure won't consider this one - all of which will deepen class polarisation!

2) Fighting the government: anarchists must be there arguing against national protectionism, against arguments to "engage" the local state, against calls for the state to "stand up" to capital, against multi-class coalitions and calls for nationalization. Instead, our focus must be on promoting the self-emancipation of the working class through its own struggles, organizations, and efforts, on the need to mobilize outside and against the state, and on class struggle anti-capitalism).

This means:

- Fighting for practical international solidarity with workers in sweatshops and in subcontracting companies through campaigns, actions etc., informed by the overall perspective of winning international labor standards (a

agreements etc.

- Exposure of the class basis of neo-liberalism as an attempt to drive down wages and working conditions, and open up the economy for privatization and speculation, and hence, of the need for a class response that has no illusions in the capitalist state

- Opposing privatization because it harms the working class through job loss and worsening social services, and not because we think nationalization is some sort of step towards socialism and workers' control. Instead of calling for more nationalization as an alternative to privatization- which won't happen and in any event won't empower the working class- anarchists should raise demands for worker and community self-management of social services and infrastructure, and stress the right of the working class to a decent life.

Aims And Objectives

The aim of these tactics and demands is simple. These points are put forward as means to develop a powerful, democratic, and internationalist working class coalition centred on unions, but also involving communities, tenants, students etc. Further, these points are also meant to help develop a libertarian and anti-capitalist consciousness of the international nature of the class struggle, the opposition between the working class, on the one hand, and the state and capital on the other, and a generalised confidence and belief in the desirability, necessity and possibility of self-managed stateless socialism (i.e. anarchy).

Many in the "anti-globalization" movement will not accept these aims. But this is precisely why our intervention in the anti-globalization movement as militants with clear ideas and tactics is so vital.

And this is also why we need anarchist political organizations with theoretical and tactical unity and collective responsibility, groups of the type advocated by Nestor Makhno and Peter Arshinov in the *Organizational Platform of the Libertarian Communists* in 1926. Unity, clarity, dedication are our indispensable revolutionary weapons against an enormously powerful and confident capitalist enemy. We can win.

Lucien van der Walt
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May Day; Paris, France, May 1, 2000

widest dissemination of information to the "base" members of the structures

- Fights and demands that promote class polarization and expose the class basis of neo-liberalism. We can raise "reformist" demands with a class war bite. (For example, take a company in a financial crisis. The bosses will say let's save money by outsourcing workers and slashing jobs. Anarchist militants can instead raise the apparently "reformist" demand that the company can be saved by slashing management

global minimum wage, global basic conditions of employment, etc.) and global trade unionism of the base. This is the real working class basis for opposing cheap imports: better wages for all, rather than a race to the bottom where we see who can earn the least, or chauvinist protectionism.

- Labor-based regulation of working conditions, through practical solidarity action, rather than appeals to the WTO etc. to enforce labour standards through a social clause in free trade

Anarchy in Our Lifetime: Black Blocs, Property Destruction and Anarchist Tactics

by Chuck0 (Mid-Atlantic Infoshop)



It's been a year since the protest heard round the world shook the streets of downtown Seattle. It's been over a year and a half since the June 18th protests shook cities around the world in 1999 with a surprise show of anti-capitalist activism. Since these ground-breaking protests, there have been major anti-capitalist protests this year in Davos, Switzerland; Washington, DC; Windsor, Ontario; Melbourne, Australia; and most recently in Prague, Czech Republic, and Nice, France. We also shouldn't forget the dozens of anti-capitalist protests that happened on May Day around the world, and the ongoing resistance in oppressed communities in the Global South.

Without a doubt, these protests have injected new life into activist movements that had gotten bogged down in routine, defeatism and stagnation. Activists around the world have been re-energized about using direct action to effect social change. A whole new generation has been introduced to the practice of extralegal direct action and the older activist generations have been challenged about the inefficacy of their tactics and strategies.

If you've followed the direct action movements in the past few years, the J18 and Seattle protests shouldn't have surprised you as much as they did most people. Many aspects of these actions relied on new radical, nonviolent civil disobedience techniques, such as lockdowns, which were first developed in the Earth First! movement. Another aspect of the blockades, the street party, was developed by Reclaim the Streets, in protests against road-building in the U.K. The decentralized international network which promoted and organized these actions was based on insights gained from Internet activism. Democratic decision-making processes like the spokescouncil came out of the anti-nuke and anti-war movements. Affinity groups were invented by anarchists before the Spanish Civil War of 1936. The Independent Media Center (IMC) has its roots in the growing alternative media movement and can be traced back to the CounterMedia project, which existed during the 1996 anti-Democratic Convention protests in Chicago. The convergence center can probably be traced back several ways, including the anarchist centers at national gatherings. Finally, the black bloc has been a tactic used infrequently by American anarchists going back a decade.

The anti-WTO protests in Seattle (1999), which were held in conjunction with the November 30th (N30) international day of anti-

capitalist actions, were noteworthy in the ways they showed how dissent and resistance could be done differently. Instead of a long afternoon rally with boring Leftist speakers and a tame permitted march around the block, the activists in Seattle attempted to blockade a meeting of capitalists, with traditional nonviolent CD mixed in with a new technology called "lockdowns." The corporate media was subjected to eye-catching spectacles like banner hangs, puppets, and radical cheerleaders. One group of activists, the black bloc, introduced the world to the sight of property destruction in a major urban commercial district during the apex of the "new economy" boom. All of these actions, from the blockades to the property destruction, took place outside of the parameters of dissent that the American state and modern capitalism had thought it had handcuffed us with. The *collective* work of thousands of activists during those weeks in November and December of last year are what gave us our first victory in a long time.

I wasn't in Seattle for the protests, but let me tell you, I couldn't sleep at all that week. I was so excited. I've been an anarchist activist for 15 years and the events in Seattle were a visible reminder of what we can accomplish if we work together. I think it is safe to say that Seattle changed many lives and gave many of us veteran activists new motivation to keep struggling.

This article was originally written for a panel discussion on property destruction as an activist tactic. It was also about what anarchists bring to these protests, especially in the way of the "black blocs." It would be interesting to explore the new activist tactics in general, like Reclaim the Streets, but I'll focus here on the tactic of property destruction, in the context of recent mass protests.

What Is The Black Bloc?

After Seattle, the phrase black bloc was not just on the tongues of activists, but it entered the living rooms of millions of Americans. Like the Seattle protests, most people must have thought that these black bloc anarchists had materialized out of a vacuum. Black blocs are not something new, at least to North American anarchists. They got their start in the early 90s, around the time of the Gulf War. They were inspired by the German Autonomen movement of the 1980s. The Autonomen were a movement of mostly punk Leftists who squatted buildings and engaged in street fights against

the police and neo-nazis. One of the earliest black blocs in North America happened during the 1992 anti-Columbus Day protests in San Francisco. More recently, a black bloc was organized for the Millions 4 Mumia march in Philadelphia (1999). That contingent marched with the other groups—one of its goals was to say that anarchists have made a contribution to the struggle to free Mumia, which hadn't been appreciated by other Left groups. Our black bloc call mobilized several thousand anarchists from around the U.S. and comprised a significant portion of that march.

In the past year, there have been black blocs at numerous actions, including Seattle, the anti-World Bank protests in Washington, various May Day protests, the anti-OAS protests in Windsor, Ontario, the protests at the Democratic and Republican conventions, the anti-World Economic Forum protest in Melbourne, the S26 actions against the World Bank in Prague, the anti-EU protests in Nice, and outside the Presidential debates in Boston and Winston-Salem this past October.

It's Been A BUSY YEAR!

You may be wondering what a black bloc is. Why do some anarchists do this tactic? There are many perceptions about the black bloc in activist circles, some of them right and some wrong. Let's briefly go over "Black Bloc Basics 101."

First of all, let's go over what the black bloc is NOT. The black bloc isn't a secret organization and it isn't a vanguard. The black bloc isn't the movement marines. It's not a bunch of "rent-a-rioters." It's not a bunch of young hooligans who are out looking for cheap thrills. Take this writer, for example. I'm a middle age officer worker, no tattoos or piercings. I take a shower every morning. I marched with the A16 black bloc. The black bloc also isn't a do-it-yourself cop-fighting unit. Finally, they aren't all Eugene anarchists.

What is a Black Bloc? A black bloc is a collection of anarchists and anarchist affinity groups that organize together for a particular protest action. The flavor of the black bloc changes from action to action, but the main goals are to provide solidarity in the face of a repressive police state and to convey an anarchist critique of whatever is being protested that day.

There are several reasons why we

do black blocs at major protests. These reasons include: 1) solidarity - a massive number of anarchists provides cover against police repression and it demonstrates the principles of working class solidarity; 2) visibility - the black bloc as gay pride march; 3) ideas - a way to present an anarchist critique of the protest topic du jour; 4) mutual aid and free association - it provides a visual example of how affinity groups can come together in a larger group and articulate common goals; and 5) escalation - a method for ratcheting up a protest movement so that it goes beyond mere reformism and appeals to the state to remedy injustice.

The tactics of the black bloc have not been embraced by all anarchists. There was quite a debate within the anarchist movement after Seattle, especially over the property destruction. Most opposition to the property destruction was based on specific philosophies about tactics that some anarchists hold. Now that almost a year has passed, and after several similar actions, I'm beginning to think that some of the opposition to the Seattle property destruction was because of a generational divide within the movement. At least it appears that most of the opposition to property destruction comes from anarchists over the age of 30. Needless to say, property destruction will remain a topic of debate within anarchism, especially as new situations develop.

Why Property Destruction?

This was the question on the minds of many people after Seattle. There are two main motivations behind engaging in targeted property destruction at a major anti-capitalist protests. The first one is the idea of monkey-wrenching capitalism directly. Jose Bove drives his tractor through the McDonalds. Anti-genetically modified foods activists uproot crops. Earth First! activists destroy and damage earthmoving equipment. These actions show the state that we are serious about fighting capitalism and that we won't participate in their sham "democratic" institutions. We can't be placated by reforms. The activists who do these things understand that direct action works, it gets publicity, and it can't be co-opted. It's very hard for capitalism to, as the Situationists would say, "recuperate its opposition," if the opposition is trashing McDonalds. Property destruction doesn't lead to Body Shop-green capitalism or Beltway environmentalism, where the organization has CEOs from major corporations sitting on the board of directors. MTV has tried to recuperate these radical tactics, but I won't go into that...

The second reason is that property destruction is a symbolic action. It shatters

myths about corporations being good citizens. It also monkeywrenches capitalist propaganda about the sanctity of "private property." Property destruction strips away myths about what violence is. Who was hurt when Seattle protesters hurled newspaper boxes through the windows of Starbucks? Why do some activists buy into the capitalist myth that destroying property is violent? The idea that one can be "violent" towards property cheapens the real violence that capitalism inflicts on millions every day.

Let me quote from the Seattle black bloc's communique, since I think they explain their motivations pretty well:

Private property—and capitalism, by extension—is intrinsically violent and repressive and cannot be reformed or mitigated. Whether the power of everyone is concentrated into the hands of a few corporate heads or diverted into a regulatory apparatus charged with mitigating the disasters of the latter, no one can be as free or as powerful as they could be in a non-hierarchical society.

When we smash a window, we aim to destroy the thin veneer of legitimacy that surrounds private property rights. At the same time, we exorcize that set of violent and destructive social relationships which has been imbued in almost everything around us. By "destroying" private property, we convert its limited exchange value into an expanded use value. A storefront window becomes a vent to let some fresh air into the oppressive atmosphere of a retail outlet (at least until the police decide to tear-gas a nearby road blockade). A newspaper box becomes a tool for creating such vents or a small blockade for the reclamation of public space or an object to improve one's vantage point by standing on it. A dumpster becomes an obstruction to a phalanx of rioting cops and a source of heat and light. A building facade becomes a message board to record brainstorm ideas for a better world."

The property destruction in Seattle, although it cost the city and merchants millions of dollars, was small potatoes compared to your typical sports championship celebration, or, as a fellow Wobbly pointed out to me recently, the recent Verizon strike. That strike included far more violence and property destruction than we saw in Seattle (if you count out the police violence).

Frustration With Typical Left Activists

There are other motivations for doing black blocs at these big actions. One motivation for me is my frustration with the total lameness of Left protests in the past 10 years. I've lost track of the rallies and marches that I've attended, that got no press and pretty much preached to the converted. I've grown tired of

seeing activists who are too timid to challenge the cops over our right to march in the streets. These activists have developed elaborate excuses to justify their timidity and obedience to authority. Left protests also have lacked any sense of humor. The Left did not give us Art and Revolution puppets, the Anarchist Dance Bloc (at the L.A. DNC protests this summer), or the Revolutionary Anti-Capitalist Spock Bloc (L.A. DNC protest). According to the latter, "hierarchy is illogical."

I'm also tired of hearing Left rally speakers talk about revolution one minute and the next minute they are negotiating with the cops over the parade route. I'm tired of civil disobedience that is way too 'civil' and not disobedient enough. Even though I defended non-violent civil disobedience (NVCD) to a bunch of black blockers after A16, they had a good point about the lameness of that negotiated line-crossing on A17. In other words, I want to be involved in activism that is effective AND fun.

Working Together?

Is there a way for groups with varying tactical and ideological differences to work together? I hope so. I think we've been doing a good job so far. There are some serious questions around the coexistence of tactics that need to be discussed. How can we create big actions that are inclusive of a large range of tactics? I had an interesting discussion about this on e-mail recently with Rob Naiman. I agree with him that we need to take strategic considerations into account more. I think the black bloc did that at A16, where we focused on blocking the streets, building barricades, and providing support and defense to nonviolent barricades. There was some property destruction, but Seattle scale p-d was not a tactic that was relevant to A16. Successful coexistence of tactics will take some creative solutions. One solution may be to temporally segregate tactics. One day can be for NGO protests and a labor rally. The next day for a blockade of the meeting. Another day for forums and teach-ins. I think Prague showed some possibilities with different blocks having different tactical flavors.

To be continued...



A Short History of Anarchist Organization (part 1): From the 'International' to the First World War

by Nicolas Phebus (Groupe Anarchiste Emile-Henry)

Although we can find "anarchist" aspirations and tendencies in almost any given historical period, distinct anti-authoritarian ideas first appeared in the European socialist movement of the 1840's. It was the Frenchmen Pierre-Joseph Proudhon with his anti-state federalist ideas and mutualism that initiated the historical anarchist movement. However, Proudhon, who was also the first revolutionary to claim the label "anarchist", never developed a fully coherent program for his political and economic theories. Anarchist ideas crystallized some 20 years later, between 1864 and 1872 in the First International, around the organizational activity of the Russian revolutionary Michael Bakunin.

The International Worker's Association (IWA, also known as the 'First International') was founded in 1864 in London, England. The idea of such an association was first aired during the Universal Exposition of London, in 1862, by English trade-unionists who wanted to find a way to receive solidarity from French worker's who were often used as strike breakers by English bosses. Contrary to its successor, the First International was composed of every possible kind of worker's associations (everything from trade-union and worker's cooperatives to worker's party and 'resistance societies') and assumed from the beginning a revolutionary orientation, stating its goal as the "emancipation of the working class by the working class itself". It soon gained a mass membership, claiming 2 millions members world-wide, with 1.2 million in Europe alone, and was involved in most class conflicts of the time. The International was also, as one would expect, the main battlefield of competing socialist tendencies.

The anarchists' ideas on organization were, then as now, two fold: social and political. That is, they saw the need for both a 'class' and a 'political' organization. The 'class' organization was, of course, the International itself. The idea was to have a self-managed mass organization where people would learn how to fight and how to organize themselves. It was the working classes who were to free themselves by their own direct action, and their organization was supposed to be a prefiguration of the future society. In order to achieve that, they needed to be organized directly at the point of production, the place where the class conflict is most evident. Eventually, in a revolutionary situation, the organized working class (the International),

would seized the means of production and socialize them (that is, operate them in its own class interests and do away with the capitalists and the State). However, since there was many competing visions of strategy and goals, there was a need to unite like minded revolutionaries, if only to agitate for these goals and visions and win people to it (in other words to engage in the "battle of ideas"). That is, there was a need for a 'political' organization.

It's in the midst of the First International that we find traces of the first ever specifically anarchist political organization: the Alliance of Social Democracy. The Alliance was founded around 1868 by Michael Bakunin, and its goal was to unite anti-authoritarians around its anarchist program and organization in an effort to influence mass movements and orient them towards revolutionary ideas and practice. In a program drafted by Bakunin, the purpose of the Alliance was outlined as follows: *"The revolutionary alliance excludes any idea of dictatorship and of a controlling and directive power. It is, however, necessary for the establishment of this revolutionary alliance and for the triumph of the Revolution over reaction that the unity of ideas and of revolutionary action find an organ in the midst of popular anarchy which will be the life and the energy of the Revolution"*.

The Alliance was structured at two levels, international and national, and was run by an international central council and a general assembly. In fact, most of the work was done through the exchange of letters between members and the occasional visit of a propagandist or organizer. The Alliance soon chose the 'First International' as its main battlefield and decided that its goal would now be to build the International in an effort to influence the organization toward anti-authoritarian ideas. However, as soon as the Alliance applied for membership within the International, it was refused and forced to disband itself if affiliated groups wanted to join (which was done). To give an idea of the size of the organization, let's say that when it joined the International, it had some 70 international members, with 145 members in its local section in Geneva. Even if it was officially disbanded, most international members kept in good contact between one and other, forming a de facto international faction, and some local and national organizations refused to disband and kept a clandestine apparatus, known as 'The International Brotherhood' (as was the

case of Spain and Italy). The only local which was accepted as an Alliance group in the International was the Geneva local section.

The Alliance proved essential in the shaping of the emerging anarchist movement and was necessary in gaining an influence for anarchism in mass worker's movements. However, the battle of ideas within the International soon developed in an open conflict with another socialist tendency that grouped around the German revolutionaries Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. This tendency, later to become Marxism, advocated for the formation of a worker's party in order to engage in parliamentary politics. While the anarchists were advocating the destruction of the State in order to clear the way for socialism, the parliamentary socialists were advocating for the seizure of State power (by electoral or insurrectional means, depending on the situation) to build socialism from there.

Of course, these two contradictory visions could not coexist for long in the same organization, as one was advocating centralization and authoritarianism, and the other federalism and autonomy. Eventually, two main figures of anarchism, Michael Bakunin and James Guillaume from the Jura Federation, were expelled from the International in 1872. This caused a major split in the First International, as one section, the one advocating parliamentary politics, moved its headquarter in New York City, while the other split and formed an anti-authoritarian International. In both cases, it was a matter of a few years before the organization disappeared altogether.

While fighting against the faction based around Marx and Engels in the International, the anarchists pushed anti-authoritarian ideas so far that they ended up compromising the very idea of organization in the process, substituting an informal network instead. Eventually, as this informal network proved useless, as it was so decentralized and 'anti-authoritarian' it did nothing, this idea was also abandoned and people began to rely only on newspapers and letters to keep contact within the movement. At the same time, the revolutionary wave that culminated in the Paris Commune was followed by a wave of harsh repression. In many countries it was harder and harder to keep a foothold within mass movements and many anarchists became divided over questions of revolutionary strategy.

Many resorted to "propaganda by the deed," which was an idea launched at the Berne International Conference in 1876. At the beginning, the idea was to shake up the masses a little bit by means of exemplary direct actions. According to Carlo Cafiero, *"the insurrectionary deed, destined to affirm socialist principles by means of action, is the most effective means of propaganda and the only one which, without tricking and corrupting the masses, can penetrate to the deepest social strata and draw the living forces of humanity into the struggle sustained by the International."* The first to put the idea of "propaganda by the deed" in to action were the Italian anarchists (organized around Errico Malatesta, Carlo Cafiero and Andrea Costa) who tried to spark insurrections in the provinces of Caserta, Benevento, and Campobasso in April 1877. These actions failed as people gathered simply to witness the spectacle of official records being burned and anarchy proclaimed in the town square but did not take part in the insurrectionary actions. Eventually, they were arrested and thrown in jail but after a long trial they were released on a technicality (the time between their arrests and trial was too long). However, following the attempted Italian insurrections, the idea of "propaganda by the deed" soon culminated in a wave of terrorism and political assassinations. Instead of shaking things up and waking up the "people" it produced widespread anti-anarchist hysteria and resulted in further isolating militant anarchists. By the end of the century, the anarchist movement had lost most of its influence within the working class movement in all but a handful of countries (most notably Spain and Argentina).

At the turn of the century, in most places, anarchist organization was reduced to its minimum, that is, the local group. The activity was pretty much like it is today : putting up posters, writing leaflets, organizing lectures, and selling papers. The newspapers and lecturers become the de facto organizers of the movement. Local militants relied on them to help organize and spread anarchist propaganda. However, the newspapers and journals were not owned by the movement and were in fact controlled by only a handful of individuals or small groupings, often creating a cult of personality and false hierarchies within the movement. Many anarchists were not happy with this situation, and some proposed a change of strategies, discussing the need to organize.

Errico Malatesta was among them. During the summer of 1897, while underground in Italy, he wrote a series of articles entitled "Organization" in the newspaper 'Agitazione' from Ancone. In these articles, he was

advocating for the formation of an anarchist organization and called for all anarchists who agreed on a common program of goals and means to coordinate their activity in one organization. However, instead of leading to the formation of an organization, it only led to more "debate" with anti-organizational individualists. The time was not ripe. Two years later, while in exile in the USA, he wrote down a program for such an organization in the paper 'La Question Sociale' from Paterson, New Jersey, but little came of this.

At about the same time, others were also seeking a way out of the deadly cul-de-sac in which the anarchist movement found itself. In France, Fernand Pelloutier wrote a "Letter to the Anarchists" in 1899, in which he called for a massive involvement in the growing trade-union movement. Many answered the call and after a while, anarchists were able to gain decisive influence within the French CGT, leading to the Charte d'Amien where the young trade-union federation was to claim its goal was social revolution by means of a general strike and reject parliamentary politics and political parties. That was the beginning of syndicalism.

Many were deeply impressed by the results the French anarchists were having in the CGT, and at the 1905 International Anarchist Conference, syndicalism became a major topic of discussion. The conference was called by a number of anarchist federations from middle and northern Europe, and the official goal was to launch a new anarchist International. These anarchist federations had developed in countries where the "Marxist" faction of the socialist movement (social-democracy) was united, and the dominant influence within the workers' movement (contrary to France, for example). Organization became a matter of political survival for these anarchists. With that said, most of these groups broadly agreed on a syndicalist strategy but needed anarchists to argue for it in a largely reformist worker's movement.

Two factions emerged within the international anarchist movement at that time. One was based around the activity of the French syndicalists, who argued that the union strategy was sufficient and that the anarchist organization was no longer necessary. The other was based around the Italian anarchists (who just recently agreed to form a federation), most notably Malatesta who argued that syndicalism was not the final word of anarchism and warned against the potential of bureaucratization in the trade union movement. He believed that a political organization was still necessary, especially to prepare for the insurrection (Malatesta never believed in the idea of a revolutionary

general strike). Eventually, at the end of the congress, it was decided to try both strategies and, subsequently, two 'Internationals' were formed. In fact, no real organization emerged out of this conference, as people didn't want any decision-making body to gather, but instead only wanted an international correspondence office. On the other hand, the main syndicalist grouping of the time, the CGT, strongly opposed the formation of a new syndicalist International because it wanted to keep strong ties with the reformist International (for solidarity and money purposes apparently). However, a syndicalist network was formed and an international bulletin was published up until the war. As for the anarchists, outside of a declaration against the war, nothing really emerged from the office that was elected (apparently, as no one ever paid any dues, it seems they were never able to sustain the office or the planned bulletin). Up until the First World War, several national attempts were made to form anarchist federations, most of which were failures.

The first world war delivered a major blow to the entire socialist movement, including the anarchists. For years, all socialist factions warned that a new European war would be immediately followed by resistance and eventually social revolution. The syndicalists and other anarchists pledge to start a revolutionary general strike in case of war. However, not only was the war not met by a general strike, but the parliamentary socialists sided with their respective national bourgeoisie, and several of the most well known anarchist-communists theoreticians and activists (such as Kropotkin, Grave and Malato) signed a declaration of support for the western powers (France and so on). The anarchist movement was divided as other well known anarchists (such as Malatesta and Emma Goldman) signed another declaration denouncing

Kropotkin and other pro-war anarchists. All in all, it was an almost total collapse for the revolutionary movement : activists went underground, others were jailed, and many died in the war.

At the end of the war, the anarchist movement was faced with a new organized revolutionary challenge: the various Communist Parties who, in the wake of the Russian Revolution of 1917, aggressively conquered the workers' movements in country after country. The failure of the anarchist movement caused many to pause and think of new ways to organize themselves.

That's what we will see in the second part of this essay, which will cover the debate around the Organizational Platform of Libertarian Communists, synthesism, and anarchist organizations from World War II to the present.

Peter Kropotkin's Anarchist Political Economy

by Jon Bekken (Anarcho-Syndicalist Review)

Peter Kropotkin devoted a major part of his prolific anarchist writings to two related themes: examining the actual workings of capitalist economies, and developing the broad outlines of an anarchist-communist society. Kropotkin was not satisfied to merely assert that a free society was possible, he sought to show how such a society could be constructed from the materials at hand - realizing that a revolutionary movement that failed to consider the problems of production and distribution would quickly collapse. This essay outlines Kropotkin's critique of capitalist political economy and also his positive economic program. This distinction, however, is somewhat arbitrary, as Kropotkin always preferred to illustrate what might be by pointing to what already was.

Economic Doctrine

For Kropotkin, the purpose of political economy was to study society's needs and the means available (either currently in use, or which could be developed with present knowledge) to meet them.

It should try to analyze how far the present means are expedient and satisfactory... [and] should concern itself with the discovery of means for the satisfaction of these needs with the smallest possible waste of labor and with the greatest benefit to mankind in general.

It was this task that Kropotkin took on. Rather than engage in the abstract theorizing that dominated, then as now, the field, he carried out detailed studies of the agricultural and industrial techniques practical in his day (whether they were in general use or not) and their capacity to meet human needs.

Unlike most economists, Kropotkin insisted on subjecting economic theories to the same rigorous inquiry he would apply to any "scientific" theory:

When certain economists tell us that "in a perfectly free market the price of commodities is measured by the amount of labor socially necessary for their production," we do not take this assertion on faith... We not only find most of

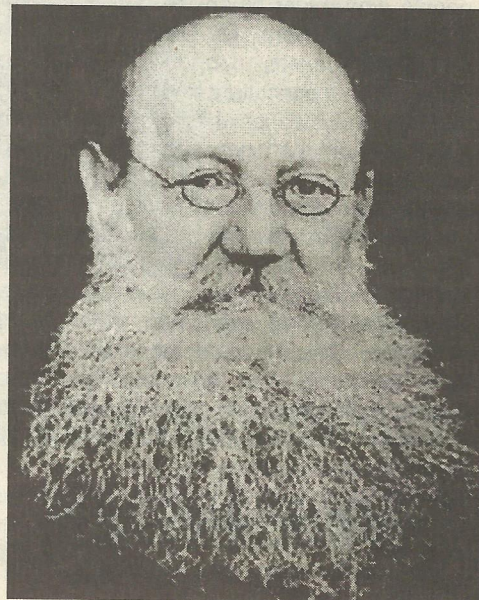
these so-called laws grossly erroneous, but maintain also that those who believe in them will themselves become convinced of their error as soon as they come to see the necessity of verifying them by quantitative investigation.

While there certainly was a relationship between the price of commodities and the amount of labor necessary for their production, Kropotkin argued, they were by no means proportional to one and other (as the Labor Theory of Value would imply). Nor had socialist economists troubled themselves to investigate whether or not the theory was true by actually gathering data to test the alleged relationship. Anyone who took the trouble to engage in such an investigation would learn that the theory was false. We need only consider the price of oil or gold to realize that these prices are set not by the amount of labor power required to extract and process them, but rather by external market and social conditions. Most so-called economic laws, Kropotkin concluded, were mere suppositions. And although socialist economists "criticize some of these deductions... it has not yet been original enough to find a path of its own."

Thus, when Marx argued against Proudhon that all products exchanged at (or, at least, fluctuated around) their labor value, he was implicitly arguing for what has been called the Iron Law of Wages (though Marx later refuted himself by conceding that union activity could decrease the level of exploitation). The Socialist Party of Great Britain and similar tendencies are wholly correct when they maintain that a Marxian analysis requires that all commodities - including labor power - are valued under capitalism at the cost of their reproduction, which in turn is determined by the most-productive available methods (thus a shirt that takes 60 minutes to make by hand or five minutes to make by machine sell for the same price on the world market). There is an element of truth to this - which is why the theory was widely accepted by the labor movement. But, as we shall see, it mistakes an association for a casual relationship. The commodity theory of labor would indicate that only by increasing pro-

ductivity can workers make possible an improved standard of living, and only through socialist revolution can those possible improvements by actually realized (otherwise, the benefits merely accrue to the capitalists and their underlings).

This doctrine leads inevitably to the conclusion that wage struggles are essentially a waste of time and energy, and that the only alternative to competing against each other into even-greater immiseration is a state-managed, planned economy which can determine labor values and ensure their equitable distribution. But this doctrine is wholly false. I turn, below, to Kropotkin's proof that wage levels have nothing to do with the cost of reproduction. But the essential point is that wage levels, like the price of all commodities, are set not by their cost of production or the amount of labor they require, but by the relative economic, military and social power held by the respective parties. Monopolies, cartels, police clubs, prisons, labor organization, co-operative associations - these and other power relationships skew the relative "value" of commodities, or at least of the price that can be gotten for them (and it really matters very little whether a cantaloupe has a theoretical, labor-derived value of twenty-five cents if all the stores charge a dollar).



Peter Kropotkin

Capitalism Not Productive

Like most socialists, Kropotkin initially assumed that an abundance of goods was being produced - and thus that the primary problem facing socialists was arranging their distribution. But when Malatesta suggested that this could not be true, Kropotkin investigated the matter, and found that (quoting Malatesta):

this accumulation of products could not possibly exist, because the bosses normally allow for the production of what they can sell at profit... Some countries were continually threatened by shortages.

In fact, there was only enough food on hand in most major cities to sustain the population for a few days. Yet, upon further investigation, Kropotkin established that the shortages, economic crises and general distress endemic to his age (and which continue to this day) did not result, as was widely believed, from overpopulation, poor soil, or other such material causes. Rather, they resulted from a failure to utilize the means already at hand to meet society's needs.

Kropotkin presented his findings in *Fields, Factories and Workshops* - an anarchist classic that proved that people using then-existing technologies could meet all their needs with just a few months of labor per year. Space precludes anything more than the briefest summary of the volume with which every anarchist should have long since made themselves familiar.

He demonstrated that the technical means then existed to produce abundant and healthful food with relatively little effort or expense (a vision quite distinct from today's factory farms - the precursors of which already existed, but which, he noted, destroyed the soil for generations to come - as well as displacing people who might otherwise derive a comfortable living from the land). Contrary to many economists, Kropotkin argued for decentralizing agriculture and industry, noting that huge industrial establishments were both less common than generally believed, and established less to realize largely dubious economies of scale than to facilitate managerial control. The doctrine of national specialization or competitive advantage - then coming into prominence, and which has since been used as an excuse to ravish "third world" economies - was demonstrably harmful to the interests of the population. If the debilitating influences of capitalist control and ignorance could be ended, abundance for all was well within reach.

All this has been proven... despite the innumerable obstacles always thrown in the way of every initiative mind... For

thousands of years... to grow one's own food was the burden, almost the curse, of humankind. But it need be so no longer... To grow the yearly food of a family, under rational conditions of culture, requires so little labor that it might almost be done as a mere change from pursuits... And again, you will be struck to see what facility and in how short a time your needs of dress and of thousands of articles of luxury can be satisfied, when production is carried on for satisfying real needs rather than for satisfying shareholders...

And yet, everywhere workers lived in misery. Contrary to the teachings of every economic school, Kropotkin argued that overproduction was far from the problem:

Far from producing more than is needed to assure material riches, we do not produce enough... If certain economists delight in writing treatises on over-production, and in explaining each industrial crisis by this cause, they would be much at a loss if called upon to name a single article produced by France in greater quantities than are necessary to satisfy the needs of the whole population... What economists call over-production is but a production that is above the purchasing power of the worker, who is reduced to poverty by capital and State...

Only exploiters, he concluded, were in abundant supply. Today there may well be overproduction of some goods (nuclear weapons, toxic chemicals, and products that must almost immediately be replaced) - but it is just as obscene today to talk of, for example, an overproduction crisis in agriculture when millions face immediate starvation.

Thus, rather than celebrating capitalism's development of society's productive capacity, as Marxists do, Kropotkin demonstrated that capitalism resulted in chronic underproduction and deprivation. Capitalists not only do not equitably distribute the fruits of our production, the entire development of technology is distorted by their short-term profit calculations. Employers faced with the possibility of new labor-saving techniques, for example, often move to drive down labor costs rather than invest in developing the means of production (their historic role, according to Marx). The Social Revolution, then, would not merely expropriate the means of production developed by the capitalists - it would be forced to rapidly develop those means in order to meet even the most basic social needs. Fortunately, the means for doing so have long been in place, and workers are

more than capable of meeting the challenge.

Wage Slavery

Like all socialists, Kropotkin recognized the self-evident truth that workers work for the employing class because they are forced to - without their weekly wages they and their families must starve.

Whence come the fortunes of the rich? A little thought would suffice to show that these fortunes have their beginnings in the poverty of the poor. When there are no longer any destitute there will no longer be any rich to exploit them.

If people had the means to support themselves - if they were capable of meeting their daily needs without hiring out their labor - no one would consent to work for wages that must inevitably be (if the capitalist is to derive any profit) a mere fraction of the value of the goods they produce. Even an independent artisan could not hope to do better than to support their family and put together an (almost certainly inadequate) pittance for their old age, should they rely on their own efforts and diligence:

Assuredly this is not how great fortunes are made. But suppose our shoemaker... takes an apprentice, the child of some poor wretch who will think himself lucky if in five years time his son has learned the trade and is able to earn his living. Meanwhile our shoemaker does not lose by him; and if trade is brisk he soon takes on a second, then a third... If he is keen enough and mean enough, his journeymen and apprentices will bring him in nearly a pound a day over and above the product of his own toil... He will gradually become rich... That is what people call "being economical and having frugal temperate habits." At bottom it is nothing more nor less than grinding the face of the poor.

Today workers have after a hundred years succeeded in improving their condition - and the apprentice system, already declining in Kropotkin's time, has all but disappeared. But saving one's earnings is no more the route to real wealth than it ever was - at best workers can hope to buy a house, afford some time off from the hated job, and put a little money aside for retirement or hard times. To become wealthy, in economic terms, requires exploitation - either directly, from workers' labor, or indirectly, by exploiting workers' need for the necessities of life.

Under capitalism, "the harder a man works the less he is paid." But the solution to this manifest injustice could not

be found in reversing this equation - in payment according to the service each renders to society. For who is to determine the value of another's service?

We know what reply we shall get... The bourgeois economists - and Marx too - will be quoted... to prove that the scale of wages has its *raison d'être*, since the "labor power" of the engineer will have cost society more than the "labor power" of the laborer... [But] the employer who pays the engineer twenty times more than the laborer makes the following simple reckoning: if the engineer can save him a hundred thousand francs a year on his production costs, he will pay the engineer twenty thousand. And when he sees a foreman, able to drive the workers and save ten thousand francs in wages, he loses no time in offering him two or three thousand... He parts with a thousand francs where he counts on gaining ten thousand, and this in essence is the capitalist system.

So let no one come up with this talk about production costs of the labor force, and tell us that the student who has cheerfully spent his youth at a university has a "right" to a salary ten times that of a miner's son who has been wasting away down a mine from the age of eleven.

Wage differentials, whether under capitalism or in some future "socialist" society, must be condemned as unjust. Nor is it possible to determine a "just wage" based on the individual's contribution (even if such a system could be tolerated on ethical grounds, which it cannot).

Production Is Social

Production is not carried out by isolated individuals whose economic contribution can be isolated from that of each other worker so that its value can be determined. To illustrate this, Kropotkin turned to coal mining. One person controls the lift, continually rushing the cage from level to level so that workers and coal may be moved about. If they relax their concentration for an instance, the apparatus will be destroyed, many workers killed, and work brought to a standstill. If they lose as little as three seconds at each movement of the lever, production will be reduced by 20 tons a day or more:

Well, is it he who renders the greatest service in the mine? Or is it perhaps that boy from below who signals him when it is time to raise the cage to the surface? Is it instead the miner who is

risking his life at every moment of the day... Or again is it the engineer who would miss the coal seam and have the miners dig into stone if he made the smallest error in his calculations?...

All the workers engaged in the mine contribute within the limits of their powers, their knowledge... and their skill to mine coal. And all we can say is that everybody has the right to live, to satisfy their needs, and even their fantasies, once the most pressing needs of all have been satisfied. But how can one estimate their labors?

Obviously you can't - no one but a Marxist would attempt such an absurdity. And yet we still have not identified everyone who contributes to the production of that coal. What of the construction workers who built the railways to the pithead, without which the coal would sit useless. What of the farmers, who raise the food the coal miners eat? What of those who build the machines that will burn the coal - without which coal is merely a rather useless dirt.

There was a time, Kropotkin concedes, when a family could support itself by agricultural pursuits, supplemented with a few domestic trades, and considered the corn they raised and the cloth they weaved as products of their own labor.

Even then such a view was not quite correct: there were forests cleared and roads built by common efforts... But now, in the extremely interwoven state of industry of which each branch supports all others, such an individualistic view can be held no more. If the iron trade and the cotton industry of this country have reached so high a degree of development, they have done so owing to the parallel growth of thousands of other industries, great and small; to the extension of the railway system; to an increase of knowledge... and, above all, to the world-trade which has itself grown up...

The Italians who died from cholera in digging the Suez Canal... have contributed as much towards the enrichment of this country as the British girl who is prematurely growing old in serving a machine in Manchester... How can we pretend to estimate the exact part of each of them in the riches accumulated around us?

And if there is no individual production, then how can private ownership of property be justified? Just as it is impossible to argue that any one person created a lump of coal or a bolt of cloth, so it is impossible to justify

private ownership of buildings or land. Homes, after all, are not built by their owners. Their construction is a cooperative endeavor involving innumerable workers in forestry, timber yards, brickyards, etc.

Moreover - and it is here that the enormity of the whole proceeding becomes most glaring - the house owes its actual value to the profit which the owner can make out of it. Now, this profit results from the fact that his house is built in a town... which the work of twenty or thirty generations has gone to render habitable, healthy and beautiful.

Like the ground they stand upon, buildings are a common heritage.

For instance, take the town of Paris - a creation of so many centuries, a product of the genius of a whole nation... How could one maintain to an inhabitant of that town who works everyday to embellish it, to purify it, to nourish it, to make it a center of thought and art - how could one assert before one who produces this wealth that the palaces adorning the streets of Paris belong in all justice to those who are the legal proprietors today... It is by spoilation that they hold these riches!

That this remains so can readily be seen by examining the value of today's office buildings and shopping complexes. Without even the slightest improvements their value rise so long as the local economy prospers. But no sum of money in maintenance or beautification is sufficient to maintain their value when the local economy fails.

For their value is not derived from the money invested, or from the bricks and mortar of which they are constructed. Not even the labor of the workers who build and maintain these modern temples to capital determines their value. Their value, in the final analysis, depends almost entirely upon the wealth and prosperity of the greater society. The most luxurious hotel built in a dying city will soon fade with its surroundings, while the meanest hovel increases in value as surrounding properties are developed. We enrich each other - not only spiritually, but materially as well - as we work, contemplate and play together; and without the efforts of society as a whole, no one prospers.

Private Ownership Absurd

Private ownership, then, is not merely unjust - it is absurd. As early as 1873, when he was only beginning to become active in revolutionary circles, Kropotkin recognized that true equality was impossible under capitalism.

If it is desirable that a person beginning to work not enslave himself, not yield part of his labor, his strength, his independence... to private individuals whose arbitrariness always will determine how great that part should be, then it is necessary that private persons control neither the instruments of labor... nor the... earth... nor the means of existence during work... Thus we arrive at the elimination, in that future society whose realization we desire, of any personal property...

All property, no matter how it was created, must become the property of all, available to all who contribute to society through their labor. This was, and remains, necessary not only on grounds of social justice, but because all production is necessarily social.

Production For Needs

Kropotkin refused to separate his analysis of what was from what could be. He insisted on asking not merely if the present economic order worked on its own terms, but whether:

the means now in use for satisfying human needs, under the present system of... production of profits, [was] really economical? Do they really lead to economy in the expenditure of human forces. Or are they not mere wasteful survivals from a past that was plunged into darkness, ignorance and oppression, and never took into consideration the economical and social value of the human being?

The "economical and social value of the human being," for Kropotkin, was the key to anarchist economics - to the building of a free society.

Anarchist Communism

Economists, Kropotkin argued, made a fundamental mistake in beginning their studies from the standpoint of production. Instead, economics should be approached from the standpoint of consumption--of human needs. Needs should govern production; the purpose of anarchist economics is not so much to understand the workings of the capitalist economy (to the extent that it can be said to work at all), but rather to study "the needs of mankind, and the means of satisfying them with the least possible waste of human energy." Although human needs are not met at present, there were no technical reasons why every family could not have comfortable homes, sufficient food, etc. The problem was not to increase productivity alone; rather, "production, having lost sight of the needs of man, has strayed in an absolutely wrong direction..."

In his monumental work *The Conquest of Bread*, Kropotkin devoted a lengthy chapter to rebutting such common objections as the notion that nobody would work without compulsion and that overseers were necessary to enforce quality standards. Free association, Kropotkin argued, was the solution to most of these objections. If loafers began to proliferate, they should be fed to the extent that available resources permitted, but treated as "ghost[s] of bourgeois society." But very few people would in fact refuse to contribute to society, "there will be no need to manufacture a code of laws on their account."

Economists' arguments in favor of property actually "only prove that man really produces most when he works in freedom..." Kropotkin argued that, far from shirking work when they do not receive a wage, when people work cooperatively for the good of all they achieve feats of productivity never realizable through economic or state coercion.

Well-being--that is to say the satisfaction of physical, artistic and moral needs, has always been the most powerful stimulant to work... A free worker, who sees ease and luxury increasing for him and for others in proportion to his efforts spends infinitely far more energy and intelligence, and obtains first-class products in a far greater abundance.

To the extent possible, all goods and services should be provided free of charge to all. Goods available in abundance should be available without limit; those in short supply should be rationed. Already, Kropotkin noted, many goods were provided based on need. Bridges no longer require tolls for passage; parks and gardens are open to all; many railroads offer monthly or annual passes; schools and roads are free; water is supplied to every house; libraries provide information to all without considering ability to pay, and offer assistance to those who do not know how to manage the catalogue. (That many of these services have been eroded in recent years does not invalidate his premise.)

Kropotkin called for expropriation not only of the means of production (land, mines, factories, etc.), but of all goods.

All is interdependent in a civilized society; it is impossible to reform any one thing without altering the whole. On that day when we strike at private property... we shall be obliged to attack all its manifestations... Once the principle of the "divine right of property" is shaken, no amount of theorizing will prevent its overthrow, here by the slaves of the soil, there by the slaves of the machine.

Since human beings "are not savages who

can live in the woods without other shelter than the branches," people will demand housing, food, clothing, and other items of consumption necessary to live any kind of decent life.

Shorter Hours

Kropotkin argued that, based upon the technology of his day, people would need put in no more than five hours a day of labor (for 25 years or so of their lives) in order to satisfy their needs for food, clothing, housing, wine, transportation and related necessities.

Such a society could in return guarantee well-being more substantial than that enjoyed today by the middle classes. And, moreover, each worker belonging to this society would have at his disposal at least five hours a day which he could devote to science, art, and individual needs which do not come under the category of necessities, but will probably do so later on, when man's productivity will have been augmented and those objects will no longer appear luxurious.

This latter point was, for Kropotkin, of the greatest importance. It was not enough merely to meet people's material wants--human beings must also be free to pursue their artistic and aesthetic senses. Kropotkin believed that luxury, far from being wasteful, was an absolute necessity. But if these joys, "now reserved to a few... to give leisure and the possibility of developing everyone's intellectual capacities," were to be obtained for all, then "the social revolution must guarantee daily bread to all."

Tastes, Kropotkin recognized, varied widely. Some people required telescopes and laboratories to complete their lives, others require dance halls or machine shops. But all of this activity was best removed from the confines of capitalist production and carried out on a voluntary, cooperative basis after participants had completed their few hours of necessary labor. Freed from the drudgery of capitalist production, we would all be free to develop our creative instincts. Kropotkin was certain that the result would be finer art, available to all; dramatic scientific advances.

Work Need Not Be Painful

Under current conditions, Kropotkin recognized, to do productive labor meant long hours in unhealthy workshops, chained to the same task for 20 or 30 years--maybe for one's entire life. It means living on a paltry wage, never sure what tomorrow will bring; and little opportunity to pursue the delights of science and art. But it was overwork, not work itself, that was repulsive to human nature.

Kropotkin felt it was also necessary to attack the division of labor that both Marxist and capitalist political economists have

extolled as a prerequisite of improved productivity (although Marx did argue that ultimately labor should be reintegrated). Kropotkin was prepared to concede that it might well be the case that a person who did only one thing, over and over again, might indeed become quite proficient at it. But such a worker "would lose all interest in his work [and] would be entirely at the mercy of his employer with his limited handicraft."

It is not enough, after the revolution, to simply reduce the hours of labor. Kropotkin found the notion that workers should be confined to a single repetitious activity a "horrible principle, so noxious to society, so brutalizing to the individual..." The Social Revolution must abolish the separation between manual and brain work, give workers control of their workplaces, and abolish wage labor. "Then work will no longer appear a curse of fate; it will become what it should be--the free exercise of all the faculties of man." Under the rubric of the division of labor, those who actually make things are not supposed to think or make decisions, while others "have the privilege of thinking for the others, and... think badly because the whole world of those who toil with their hands is unknown to them."

The division of labor means labeling and stamping men for life--some to splice rope in factories, some to be foremen in a business, others to shove huge coal baskets in a particular part of a mine; but none of them to have any idea of machinery as a whole, nor of business, nor of mines. And thereby they destroy the love of work and the capacity for invention...

It would be far better, Kropotkin argued, for teachers to share in the duties of washing the floors, sweeping the school-yard, and the myriad of other tasks essential to school operations, than to allow the formation of an intelligentsia, "an aristocracy of skilled labor."

And much of the advantage derived from the division of labor is in any event lost through the necessity it creates to cart goods from place to place, and to create enormous bureaucracies to coordinate production of disparate parts that must ultimately be integrated into a single machine. The advantages of centralized production are similarly illusory. While it is sometimes convenient for capitalists to bring their operations under central control, this is not because of any technical advantages. Industry is centralized to facilitate market domination, not because of often non-existent economies of scale. To

this day, the high-tech, advanced industries so often held up to demonstrate the superiority of centralized control are often carried out in small-scale, dispersed operations. Decentralization is, in fact, more efficient.

Abolish the Wage System

Kropotkin argued that the coming social revolution's "great[est] service to humanity" would be "to make the wage system in all its forms an impossibility." In Kropotkin's day, most socialists acknowledged the need to abolish the wage system, but argued for its replacement by labor tokens representing either the "value" of people's labor or time put in on the job. Kropotkin, too, argued for such a system in 1873. But he soon concluded that such schemes were both wildly impractical and thoroughly reformist:

Once the abolition of private property is proclaimed, and the possession in common of all the means of production is introduced--how can the wages system be maintained in any form? This is, nevertheless, what collectivists are doing when they recommend the use of the 'labor-cheques as a mode of remuneration for labor.

Today labor vouchers are out of favor, but most socialists still accept the wage system and money as inevitable. Proponents of such schemes argue that they are needed "in order to avoid systematic and massive misallocation of time and resources." The marketplace is, of course, a time-tested mechanism for ascertaining social needs and preferences for goods. The reason there is mass starvation in Africa is not because the market doesn't work to meet human needs, but because our fellow workers prefer not to eat.

Such devices make sense only within the framework of a market economy where goods are produced and distributed not on the basis of need, but on ability to pay. Whether such an economic system maintains wage differentials (the arguments against these were reviewed in the first installment) or proclaims equal wages (or, perhaps, wage differentials favoring those engaged in "disagreeable or unhealthy work"), it nevertheless upholds an organization of production and consumption which originated in private property -- and which is realizable only within its constraints.

Kropotkin refuted such arguments 100 years ago, when they were still fresh:

They say, "No private property," and immediately after strive to maintain pri-

vate property in its daily manifestations... It can never be. For the day on which old institutions will fall under the proletarian axe, voices will call out: 'Bread, shelter, ease for all!' And those voices will be listened to; the people will say: 'Let us begin by allaying our thirst for life, for happiness, for liberty, that we have never quenched. And when we shall have tasted of this joy, we will set to work to demolish the last vestiges of middle-class rule: its morality drawn from account-books, its "debit and credit" philosophy... and we shall build in the name of Communism and Anarchy.'

If there was a genuine shortage of necessities, Kropotkin argued that it was more just to ration goods than to maintain mechanisms for exchange. The wage system, in all its forms, should be rejected in favor of communist principles; for if wages are to be maintained (whether based on labor, or any other measure) a State apparatus is perforce necessary as well.

But the fundamental point was that people must seize control of their economic destiny--must be prepared to experiment with new processes and new methods of organization while taking advantage of the existing methods to meet immediate needs. The technical means of satisfying human needs, Kropotkin was convinced, were at hand, "The only thing that may be wanting to the Revolution is the boldness of initiative... Ceasing to produce for unknown buyers, and looking in its midst for needs and tastes to be satisfied, society will liberally assure the life and ease of each of its members, as well as that moral satisfaction which work gives when freely chosen and freely accomplished..."

The Social Revolution would build on the basis of what was-- seizing the existing industries and goods to meet immediate needs and as the building blocks from which we would construct a free society. And while it is neither possible nor desirable to spell out in every detail how such an economy might operate, Kropotkin argued that it was in fact essential to think about its general outlines in advance, so that we might build with a purpose. Expropriation, direct action, federalism and self-management were, for Kropotkin, the means. But a society not built upon communist principles would inevitably succumb to the central power it established to oversee production and distribution. Only the free distribution of necessities, in all their variety, on the basis not of position or productivity, but of need, was compatible with a free society.

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